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SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

NITISH KUMAR

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CHOUHAN TO OVERSEE KEY MEETING TO PICK NEW BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

The BJP on Sunday appointed Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan as the central observer for the election of its legislative party leader in Bihar

PROCESS ON TO FORM NEW STATE GOVERNMENT

A statement from the BJP headquarters said the parliamentary board has appointed Chouhan as "central observer for electing the leader of legislature party in Bihar". Chouhan's appointment sets in motion the process of the formation of a new government in Bihar after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar took oath as a member of Rajya Sabha on Friday

NITISH KUMAR LIKELY TO RESIGN ON TUESDAY

- Nitish has convened a meeting of his cabinet on April 14, following which the JD(U) president is expected to relinquish the CM's post
- Senior JD(U) leader and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Vijay Kumar Chaudhary said, "The new chief minister will be elected by the NDA, upon the recommendation of the BJP, which has a big role to play" | **P8**

11 AM

WHEN THE CABINET MEETING WILL BEGIN ON TUESDAY

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Trump threatens to block Strait as US-Iran talks fail

AGENCIES @ Islamabad / Washington

US President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed the US Navy would immediately begin a "blockade" to stop ships from entering or leaving the Strait of Hormuz, after US-Iran peace talks in Pakistan ended with no agreement in sight.

Iran has demanded the right to collect tolls from vessels traveling through the strait, but Trump said no one who pays Tehran will "have safe passage on the high seas." He also threatened, yet again, to destroy Iranian energy infrastructure, telling *Fox News*: "I can take out Iran in one day."

Earlier in the day, the US and Iran ended 21 hours of face-to-face talks in Islamabad in a stalemate, leaving the fate of the tenuous two-week ceasefire unclear. The war that has killed thousands of people and shaken global markets has entered its seventh week.

The US delegation led by Vice President J D Vance and the Iranian delegation led by parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf had discussed how to advance a ceasefire already threatened by disagreements and Israel's continued attacks on Lebanon.

US Vice President J D Vance talks to Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir before flying out of Islamabad on Sunday | AP

DAY 44 | WAR WATCH

Vance, while leaving Pakistan after the talks, said the US had made its "final and best offer" for a deal, adding: "We'll see if the Iranians accept it."

Ghalibaf said on X that Washington was "unable to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round of negotiations". Iranian and US media said the main sticking points in the talks were the Strait of Hormuz and Tehran's insistence on a right to enrich uranium for civilian use.

Later, in a *Fox News* interview, Trump threatened to impose a 50% tariff on Chinese imports if Beijing tries to help the Iranian military. Trump did not name the other countries he expects to join the US Navy cordon and, before his post, many international capitals had called for the temporary truce in the Gulf to be preserved. "We're not going to let Iran make money on selling oil to people that they like... It's going to be all or none," he said.

The failure of the talks will raise concerns that a return to fighting could drive world energy prices higher and further damage shipping and oil and gas facilities in the Gulf.

Modi to address women's meet ahead of Parl session

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

AHEAD of an extended three-day special session of Parliament from April 16 to 18 to discuss amendments to Women's Reservation Act 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to address a first-of-its-kind "Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan" in Delhi on Monday.

As per sources, the conference is aimed at generating widespread support for amendment to the Women's Reservation Act 2023. It forms a part of the BJP's broader electoral strategy, bringing together eminent personalities and accomplished women from diverse fields to deliberate on the necessity of reserving seats for women in legislative bodies.

The Prime Minister's Office said the conference is being organised to reinforce the government's commitment to increase women's participation in shaping India's development trajectory. "It will highlight the increasing role of women in governance and leadership across all levels – from Panchayats to Parliament. The programme will underscore the importance of enhanced representation of women in decision-making processes... It will reflect the government's continued commitment towards women-led development as a central pillar of the vision for Viksit Bharat 2047", it said.

In September 2023, Parliament passed the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam', which provided for the reservation of one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

The provision to provide 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies was brought by amending the Constitution in 2023. However, it would have come into effect only after the completion of the delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2027 Census.

Cong seeks all-party meet after polls

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to PM Narendra Modi conveying that the special session of Parliament being convened to discuss women's quota is "a clear breach of the Model Code of Conduct". He demanded that an all-party meeting be called after the state elections are over | **P7**

ASHA BHOSLE: SEPTEMBER 8, 1933-APRIL 12, 2026

FOREVER YOUNG, ALWAYS DISTINCT

NAMRATA JOSHI

AGE is just a number" is an adage Asha Bhosle believed in and lived by. Among the many facets of her long, abundant, and well-spent inning—professional as well as personal—the most distinct was the versatile voice: hearty, playful, coquettish, saucy, sensuous, spiritual, soulful and energetic by turns and the one that stayed forever youthful and timeless, just like Asha Tai herself.

The fact that the sound of Asha remained robust was the reason why, in her over eight-decade long career in a notoriously ageist industry, she didn't just sing for multiple films but became the voice of several generations of actresses—from Meena Kumari to Zeenat Aman to Rekha, from her contemporary Shakila in the sad version of *Leke pehla pehla pyaar* in *CID* (1956) to someone who could well be her daughter's age, like Urmila Matondkar in *Tanha tanha yahan pe jeena* in *Rangeela* (1995).

She worked with possibly every major music director down the years: O P Nayyar, Shankar Jaikishan, Jaidev, Madan Mohan, Khayyam, the Burmans, A R Rahman and Sandeep Chowta. She sang duets with male singers across all ages, from Kishore Kumar, Mohammad Rafi, and Mahendra Kapoor to Sonu Nigam. Winner of several awards, including two National Awards, Asha received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2000 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2008.

However, these markers aside, Asha became a legend of playback singing because of the extraordinary ability to imbibe the personality of the actor, get into the mood of the moment, respond to the space and setting of the sequence and catch the emotive soul of a song with the amazing texture and timbre of her voice. She could become the innocent and impoverished street kids in *Boot Polish* (1954) in songs like *Nanhe munne bachche teri mutthi mein kya hai*, *Thehar zara o janewale*, *Chali kaunse desh* just as effortlessly as she'd be the sexy Helen in a cabaret club in *Piya tu ab to aaja* in Caravan (1971) or *Yeh mera dil* in Don (1978).

Asha's father, Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar, was an eminent musician himself, and so were the siblings—Lata Mangeshkar, Meena Khadikar, Usha Mangeshkar, and Hridaynath Mangeshkar. There had been tales of sibling rivalry between her and the legendary elder sister, Lata Mangeshkar, but both eventually carved enviable and influential niches for themselves and ruled the male-dominated industry with confidence and conviction.

The last of an entire generation of playback stalwarts of the Golden Era of Hindi film music, her clear vocalisation, perfect diction and right enunciation were enough for her to embrace a range of languages and dialects, both Indian and international. The range extended from classical, folk, bhajans to the Westernised cabarets and discos. **P7, CE P1**

Pay a premium fee, get swift GBA service

ANUBHAB ROY @ Bengaluru

THE Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has proposed the opening up of two "seva kendras" in each of its five city corporations, claiming to make services such as registration of births, e-khatas and many others faster and more transparent, at the payment of premium fees.

The obvious questions that emerge at this juncture are: why make new centres instead of making the existing ones function like they are supposed to, and more importantly, are basic necessities an exclusive domain of the privileged?

To achieve this, the GBA has floated a tender recently for private companies to bid and set the costs of 27 services, promised to be delivered under one roof. While the scheme appears to give relief to citizens from being extorted by middlemen and corporation staff, many people are of the opinion that concept is "absurd".

CONTINUED ON: P2

Phone in RR dugout: ACSU to investigate

GOMESH S & FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

A DAY after Rajasthan Royals manager Romi Bhinder was seen using a phone while sitting in the dugout – which could be in violation of Players and Match Officials Area protocol – during an Indian Premier League tie, BCCI said their Anti Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) will investigate the matter.

The incident occurred during the 11th over of the IPL tie between Royals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Friday night in Guwahati. Bhinder was using his phone in dugout while teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was seen taking a look at the screen during the broadcast. The ACSU have already begun their investigation.

"We have asked the ACSU to investigate and file a report on the incident," IPL Governing Council Chair Arun Dhumal told this daily. Are there any exceptions? Why was Bhinder using the phone? These are some of the questions the franchise will have to answer.

RCB BEAT MI BY 18 RUNS | P11

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WHITE ELEPHANT?

Over 1,000 unsold flats cost BDA ₹22–25L a month

INDRA S @ Bengaluru

OVER 1,000 one-BHK flats constructed by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) remain unsold, leading to a maintenance expenditure of Rs 25 lakh each month.

In response to an unstarred question by BJP MLA Suresh Kumar S, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that 1,026 flats built for economically weaker sections are yet to be sold. Of these, around 470 units are located in the Aluru Housing Project.

The government said the unsold flats have resulted in an unrealised revenue of about Rs 65 crore, and an additional interest loss of Rs 50 lakh at 7.5% has been incurred.

Despite the unsold inventory, the government has maintained that there is demand for BDA housing complexes and that the flats are being offered at affordable prices. The BDA is spending Rs 25 lakh each month on maintenance of these flats, including electricity charges, lift upkeep, waste disposal, and other related expenses.

Addressing concerns about construction quality, the government stated that BDA engineers are in regular coordination with Residents Welfare Associations (RWAs), and complaints are being addressed promptly. It also maintained that the construction quality of its housing projects is of a high standard.

While BDA officials told TNIE that BDA has identified the issue of unsold inventory and taken on priority to clear it by December 2026. BDA has undertaken awareness program to promote their flats.

BDA officials also said that there has been a boost in the number of flats booked in the month of February where 198 flats were booked compared to 34 flats in January. While offering clarity over the maintenance cost, BDA said that until any property is handed over to Resident Welfare Associations (RWA) the authority is still the caretaker of the property.

BDA engineers are in regular coordination with RWAs, and complaints are being addressed. The construction quality of its housing projects is of a high standard –State government

OFFICIALS UNAWARE OF HOW RANKINGS ARE GIVEN; BENGALURU WAS FIFTH DIRTIEST LAST YEAR

City gets scrubdown, looks to go up Swachh ladder

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

Garbage lies scattered on 100 Feet Road near Ullal Ring Road in Sir MV Layout, Bengaluru, on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

BENGALURU, which ended up as the fifth dirtiest city in the previous Swachh Survekshan survey, is undertaking massive clean-up drives across the five city corporations, hoping to improve its ranking at least this year. Teams of workers are diligently cleaning up flyovers, stormwater drains, underpasses, major junctions and beautifying black spots, among others. However, solid waste management (SWM) experts point out that these frantic cleanups would not fetch more marks in the annual cleanliness survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

Speaking to *TNIE*, SWM expert V Ram Prasad, who has worked with the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike for previous surveys and with other cities, including Srinagar and Ranchi, on pro bono basis said, "The survey has been happening for the past ten years, and still officials are not clear how the ranking is given."

Comparing the survey to a board exam, Prasad said, "Officials are not aware of the distribution of marks -- a total of 12,500 marks. There is a detailed bifurcation of 10,500 marks. While sections like visible cleanliness, solid waste management, advocacy for Swachhta, carry 1,500 marks each, ecosystem strengthening, access to sanitation, citizen feedback and grievance redressal, segregation, collection and transportation of waste, and used water management carry 1,000 marks each. The previous year's ranking should be used as a marks card to improve the areas where the city scored low."

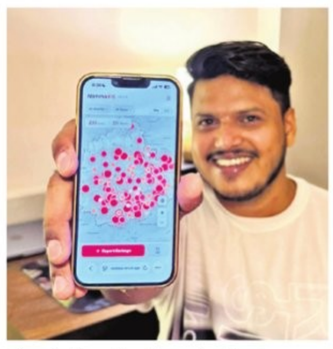
Clearing up black spots, plogging and other activities will help address the issue temporarily, but will not help improve ranking. The cleanups shouldn't be restricted to days before the assessment but be a regular exercise. We should address the root cause," he said. Also, according to guidelines of the 10th edition of Swachh Survekshan, urban local bodies (ULBs) formed on or before December 31, 2024, will be assessed in the current survey (2025-26). As the five city corporations under Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) were notified in September last year, Bengaluru can take part as a single unit, and the five corporations can take part in the survey independently in the next survey (2026-27), after a request to MoHUA.

This year places weightage on round-the-year citizen feedback through digital platforms, complaint redressal, Prasad said, adding that there is no visible step taken. Officials from the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) said they have taken a slew of measures post the survey last year, including improving segregation, which is 60 per cent according to them, introduction of Kasa Kiosks, clearing of black spots and IEC activities in public places and schools etc.

"Despite our best efforts in using treated water to fill lakes, we did not get good marks last year. We are hopeful that all our efforts in keeping Bengaluru clean will be recognised," a senior official from BSWML said, adding that they are hoping to get a rank within the top ten spots this year. GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheswar Rao said the five city corporations have been directed to keep the city clean and take measures to improve Swachh rankings. We are hopeful of getting a good rank this year, he said.

NammaKasa, a new app that helps citizens report civic problems

INDRA S @ Bengaluru



The platform that launched just four days ago has already seen nearly 45,000 users | EXPRESS

A 31-year-old Bengaluru-based product designer Jyothish VM, has developed 'NammaKasa', a civic reporting platform that enables residents to report civic issues like garbage through photos on a live map in less than 30 seconds. It is built with open-source tools, and does not require login. Within four days since its launch on April 8, it logged over 230 complaints, resolved two, and has begun fostering community-driven civic accountability.

Speaking to *TNIE*, Jyothish said that the idea was born out of everyday observations. "I was frequently complaining about civic issues and garbage in the city. Then I realised, instead of ranting, I should act," he said. What began as an attempt to address civic issues soon trickled down to the growing garbage problem in the garden city.

The platform that launched just four days ago has already seen nearly 45,000 users, reflecting strong public participation. "I had not expected such a response. It only shows that people genuinely care about the city," he said.

One of the platform's key features is its focus on accountability. Issues are mapped publicly and linked to elected representatives such as MPs and MLAs. "If there is enough visibility, it becomes easier to push for action," he noted, adding that future plans include integrating local authorities like Greater Bengaluru Authority and waste management teams.

The creator is also working on building dashboards and sharing data insights with authorities to improve response systems. "This can act as an eye for the government, helping them see problems more clearly," he said.

Importantly, the initiative also encourages behavioural change. "When people see these issues mapped out, they begin to feel responsible. Change has to start with all of us," he added.

As NammaKasa gains momentum, he said the platform currently focuses on garbage but will work to expand to other civic issues, while he also added that the platform will remain non-commercial, driven by a larger goal of enabling civic participation.

Warm days ahead, no rain relief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

People line up to buy buttermilk and ragi ambli to cool their body amid rising temperatures on Ulsoor Road on Sunday | KEVIN NASHON

THE city continued to remain warm, with maximum temperatures hovering around 35°C and minimum temperatures near 24°C. This weather will continue over the next few days, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Weather officials said no significant rainfall is expected in Bengaluru or across most parts of Karnataka for the next two or three days. The prevailing easterly and southeasterly winds are contributing to the warm conditions, bringing in heat along with moderate humidity.

"Bengaluru will remain largely dry for the next three days. While there may be some cloud formation, especially during the morning hours, it is unlikely to result in rainfall," said N Puviarasan, Scientist 'F' and Head of Meteorological Centre, IMD, Bengaluru. The absence of rain has been attributed to an anticyclonic system over land at an altitude of around 3km. "This system suppresses cloud development and prevents convection, which is essential for rainfall. As a result, rain-bearing clouds are not forming," he explained.

Across Karnataka, temperatures are rising, particularly in northern districts such as Kalaburagi, where mercury levels are nearing 40°C. However, officials clarified that this is typical for the season. "The temperature spike is normal for this time of year and does not indicate any abnormal weather pattern," he added.

Coastal Karnataka is expected to experience more discomfort due to higher humidity levels. Meteorologists said humidity could exceed 50 per cent during the day, which could rise to 70-80 per cent in the evenings, leading to "hot and humid" conditions. An advisory has been issued for coastal regions for the next three days. While most parts of the state will remain dry, isolated light rainfall may occur in parts of the Western Ghats. Karnataka is likely to experience continued warm and stable conditions.

Civic chief seeks RWAs' help as self-enumeration falls flat

BENGALURU: Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar said the self-enumeration drive in city evoked a poor response and called upon the Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) to help the survey make more impact. The commissioner said only three days are left for residents to avail the option of self-enumeration. He urged citizens and officials to work together to increase the partici-pation within the remaining period. He said the process would make data collection easier for enumerators during the next phase. Observing that enumerators often face difficulties in accessing complexes, the comm-issioner directed officials to coordinate in advance with apartment managements and obtain necessary per-missions. He requested the RWAs to create awareness about the importance of self-enumeration and encourage them to participate acti-vely. Master trainers explained the self-enumeration process and addressed queries raised by the participants. **ENS**

Affidavit unnecessary, nonsensical averments: Court

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

KATHYAYINI Chamaraj, executive trustee of Citizens' Voluntary Initiative for the City of Bangalore (CIVIC Bangalore), said, "This is just replacing the middleman with a contractor. What difference does it make? They are making quicker services available to only the affluent people. This is discriminatory, and sends out a message that the GBA will serve faster those who pay more."

Chamaraj also believes that two "seva kendras" per corporation is inadequate. "These services should be available at the ward level. Set up a Bangalore One centre at every ward, and simplify the processes therein by making the people placed there accountable. The addition of these seva kendras will only confuse people further. This, to me, is a total abdication of responsibility," she added.

Urbanist Ashwin Mahesh believes that the privatisation of the essential service domain is an admission of incompetence, and one that runs the risk of eroding public trust on state-run institutions. "The GBA has to answer if a private provider is more efficient. Without a headcount reduction at the GBA, why would you hire more people to do the same job? Some of the services that they have mentioned are included in the Sakala list. So, they are supposed to be time-sensitive deliverables by default – without having to pay premium fees. Two kendras per corporation as a concept would not work either, especially when the corporations are disparate in terms of area and population," Mahesh said.

Mahesh also believes that this is a ploy for distraction from GBA's failures. The core premise behind the creation of the GBA was decentralisation and better planning. The decision to open up seva kendras, he said, is yet another example of the GBA failing on its core premise and promise.

"The GBA is a planning body, according to them. So far, the one thing they are clearly not doing is planning. We have an urban development department, they can instruct. The people at the GBA are wasting time on interfering in other institutions' responsibilities, while neglecting theirs," Mahesh added.

Horoscopes By Holiday

HOLIDAY MATHIS

13th April : Fiery Cosmic Conjunction The highly original and creatively vibrant alignment of Mars and Neptune in Aries highlights individuality. People think differently -- some in words, some in images, and some in impulses that flow to movement. Don't assume the others are thinking like you. Pause, wonder and give yourself over to curiosity before reaction.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
Some days, the road feels endless, like the work might never loosen its grip on you. Only a couple more reps of this vibe. There is freedom on the other side. So breathe, straighten your crown and keep going.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 - May 20)
You offer the help before the other person asks. You can do this because you're paying attention and you're empathetic. You read signals of need, sometimes before the person in need fully realizes the position they are in.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)
Whatever you're doing today, you can reframe it as a rebellion against inertia and get it done very quickly: "Watch this, gravity." Suddenly, it becomes a tiny act of defiance, which gives everything energy and speed.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)
Make your value more visible. Silent skills can work as well or better than loud ones, but you still have to make noise when it's time to get paid. Share your work, document results and talk about what you do. Visibility brings opportunity.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22)
It's impossible to drive a car while standing on the curb. Likewise, today's matters require boldness, opening the door, climbing in to figure things out and taking the wheel of responsibility. From there you can go anywhere.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)
If it doesn't have a solution, it's not a problem. How long should you mull a thing around in your mind before you decide it's unsolvable? Twenty minutes. If nothing comes to mind, reintroduce that thing next week.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23)
Relationships are living things. You're not fickle, but still, your feelings change over time. You will honor why you chose someone and allow the relationship to become something new without forcing it to match what it once was.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21)
You can rely on yourself today. The question is: Can you rely on yourself repeatedly? Habits aren't declared; they're installed. This is a good time to add support while it's still new. An accountability partner helps lock it in.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
You're thinking about developing a rare or difficult skill. It's good to keep getting more specific about your goals. Scarcity increases value. Specialized knowledge, technical ability or creative expertise often act like a powerful financial magnet.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)
You won't have patience for people who are careless, distracted or half-there. If someone isn't really seeing you, you'll naturally pull your energy back -- not as a dramatic exit, but a shift. You'll leave to find people who are present, responsive and tuned in.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)
You don't wait for the vibes to be just right. You adapt to the emotional weather no matter what it is. When it's a sunny, warm feeling, you get out and enjoy it. When storms come in, you suit up, shelter or escape accordingly.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - Mar 20)
You've found something that genuinely works for you -- a way of thinking, doing or deciding. And because it's effective, other people notice. They borrow it, echo it and try it on. That's leadership in its simplest form.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

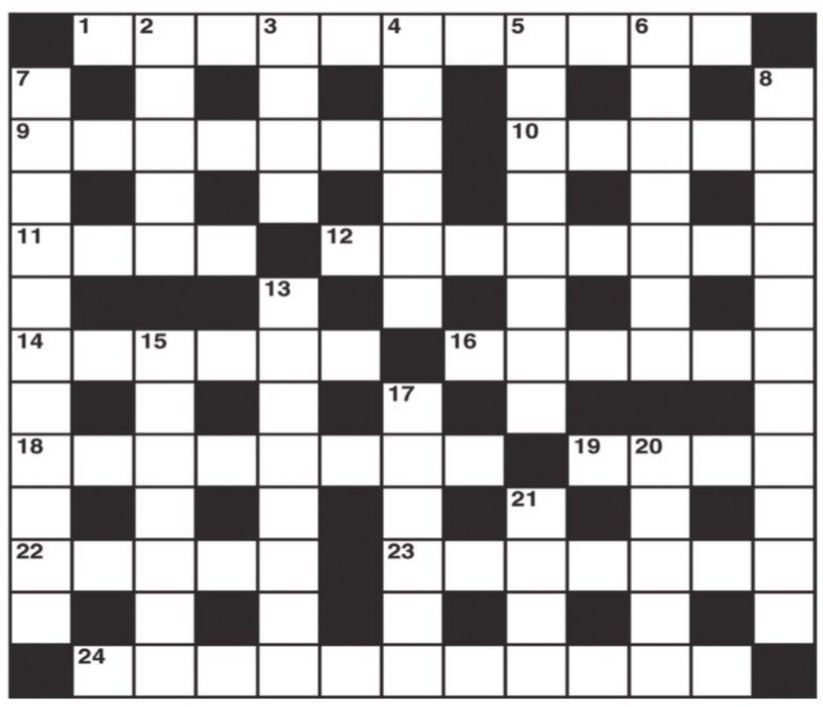
		2	1					7
	3	5	6	7				
	9			4	3	6		5
3	1						8	
4		7	9		6	1		2
	5						9	4
9		4	3	6			1	
				8	1	4	6	
1					4	2		

2	8	7	6	4	9	5	1	3
3	9	4	5	7	1	8	2	6
5	6	1	2	3	8	4	9	7
4	2	9	8	5	6	7	3	1
6	5	3	1	9	7	2	4	8
1	7	8	4	2	3	6	5	9
7	3	2	9	8	4	1	6	5
9	1	5	7	6	2	3	8	4
8	4	6	3	1	5	9	7	2

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 Clever Diane comes to the rescue (11)
9 She plays with the electricity switch (7)
10 Weapon for a knight who's lost a lot (5)
11 A noble brew of ale that's about right (4)
12 A title to own empty cargo space (8)
14 In a gem blemishes affect the standard (6)
16 Upper class taken in by government figure (6)
18 Dies of cold (3,5)
19 Shed in which all the players appear (4)
22 The leading spirit in Russia (5)
23 It's about being relevant (7)
24 It's shaped to last (4,7)

DOWN
2 Stop being an outsider (5)
3 One to be crossed with a goat (4)
4 Possibly run and see to make certain (6)
5 Mail sent astray results in complaints (8)
6 Associate with a swindling type? (7)
7 Persuade it's fantasy (4,7)
8 Tease driver wickedly to seek more publicity (11)
13 Control a toboggan rising in speed (8)
15 The scope of the Bard? (7)
17 Worker about to fight - watch out (6)
20 Quite enough; in fact ideal without former wife (5)
21 Pace of progress from the start to decay (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Ashore, 4 Astonish, 9 Tussle, 10 Habitual, 12 Coin, 13 Evils, 14 Were, 17 Exaggerating, 20 Entomologist, 23 Inns, 24 Rival, 25 Etna, 28 Intimate, 29 Spring, 30 Deployed, 31 Extent.

Down: 1 Articles, 2 Hospital, 3 Rule, 5 Scarlet woman, 6 Odin, 7 Inures, 8 Holder, 11 Ever so little, 15 Aging, 16 Annoy, 18 Diatribe, 19 Straight, 21 Pitied, 22 Instep, 26 Ammo, 27 Apex.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

LIBDU

ORMOG

RSYEDS

CJTEKA

It will be nice to get these things off of our to-do list.
It will go quickly with all of us helping out.
2/16
WHEN THE ONES AND THREES PITCHED IN TO FIX THINGS AROUND THE HOUSE, THEY DID ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: ( ) ( )

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: BLEND OFFER PETITE CARAFE
Answer: When the couple went scuba diving on Valentine's Day, the result was — DEEP AFFECTION

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

03 BENGALURU | MONDAY 13.04.2026 | newindianexpress.com

The foetus of a hippopotamus, Hamsini, at the Thyavarekoppa Lion and Tiger Safari in Shivamogga has died in the womb. Hamsini had earlier attacked and killed veterinarian Dr Samiksha at the zoo. Veterinary experts suspect that a uterine infection, likely triggered by the intrauterine foetal death, has spread through the animal's body, leading to multi-organ complications

Four students kidnap junior for ransom, held

ENS @ Bengaluru

FOUR students of a well-known management studies college were arrested by Madiwala police for allegedly kidnapping their junior for ransom. The victim was rescued within five hours and all the accused were arrested. After being detained, the accused told police the victim had borrowed money and since he was delaying repayment, they took him away in a car. But the victim denied these claims and told police he had not taken any money from any of the accused.

The victim, identified as Rishabh Mohanty (19), is a first-year degree student and native of Odisha. All the four accused -- Shaurya from Kerala, Syed Bilal from Jayanagar, Nikunj from Bihar and Adita Roxie from Maharashtra -- are his seniors. Of the four, three accused and the victim stay in the same hostel in BTM Layout 1st Stage.

After Rishabh was kidnapped, one of his friends called 112 and shared registration details of the car in which he was kidnapped. Police also obtained mobile phone details of the victim and accused, and tracked them through the tower location. The victim was rescued from a house in Jayanagar.

"The police control room received the call around 9.20pm Saturday from one of the friends of the victim. After abducting Rishabh, they demanded a ransom of Rs 50,000 to release him. They also threatened to kill the victim if the money was not arranged immediately. The victim called his friend and asked him to arrange money. The accused did not hurt the victim," said an officer.

The accused had confined the victim in a house in Jayanagar, and reportedly threatened him at knife-point. They made Rishabh call his friends to arrange the money.

Relief for woman accused of killing daughter

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Udupi

A court in Udupi has acquitted a 29-year-old woman accused of killing her four-year-old daughter, Ayesha, who was allegedly drowned in a bucket of water at their Malpe residence in the district in April 2020.

Delivering the verdict, II Additional District and Sessions Judge A. Samiulla ruled that the prosecution failed to prove the charge of murder under Section 302 of the IPC beyond reasonable doubt. The court noted that the case was marred by inconsistencies, lacked credible evidence, and failed to establish a complete chain of circumstances.

According to the case records, the child was taken to the bathroom by her mother April 10, 2020, for a bath, during which she reportedly fell into a bucket of water and briefly lost consciousness before recovering. Later that night, around 1 am, Ayesha was found unconscious again at home. Family members rushed her to KMC Hospital in Manipal, where doctors declared her brought dead.

The couple had three children, including a two-month-old son who had died of pneumonia shortly before the incident, and the husband, who worked as a lodge manager in Haveri, used to visit the family only occasionally.

Initially, the incident was treated as an unnatural death, with the child's father reporting no suspicion. However, later, suspicion was raised and a murder case was registered against the mother, alleging that she had drowned the child to prevent her from revealing a purported gold theft.

The postmortem report confirmed that the cause of death was drowning. However, the pointed out noted that medical evidence alone could not establish who caused the drowning. The possibility of accidental drowning could not be ruled out. During the trial, the prosecution examined 17 witnesses. However, several key witnesses turned hostile, and some admitted to being instructed by police to depose in a particular manner. The alleged motive of gold theft also collapsed, with witnesses contradicting each other and admitting that the story was fabricated.

Significantly, the child's father had initially stated that there was no suspicion regarding the death and raised allegations only later, which the court viewed with caution. The testimony of the child's elder sibling, projected as an eyewitness, also failed to support the prosecution's case.

The court observed that suspicion, however strong, cannot substitute proof. It further held that the prosecution had failed to present a consistent and reliable narrative linking the accused to the crime.

"In the absence of cogent evidence and a complete chain of circumstances, the benefit of doubt must go to the accused," the court ruled, acquitting the woman and ordering her release.

CONTINUING LEGACY

'Poo Pallaki' procession as part of the annual festival of Someshwara Temple passes through the streets of Ulsoor in Bengaluru on Sunday. The procession began on Saturday night and ended on Sunday evening | EXPRESS

Fruit vendor dies in freak accident in Mysore Road bus stand parking lot

BENGALURU: A 45-year-old fruit vendor died in a freak accident at the parking area of the Satellite Bus Stand on Mysuru Road at around 5 am on Sunday. The victim died after getting stuck between a car and a mobile blood bank van. The victim, Swamy Durai, a resident of Srigandha Kavalu, along with his wife Jayashri, had gone to Tamil Nadu on Saturday for a funeral. On Sunday while returning home, the couple got down from the interstate bus and were walking towards the BMTC bus stand. The parking attendant at Satellite Bus Stand hit the victim while reversing a car. On impact, the victim got stuck between two vehicles and was severely injured. The victim died enroute to Victoria Hospital. The car owner had given the key to Balasubramanya, the parking attendant, after parking his car. Balasubramanya was reversing the car to make room for another vehicle when he hit the victim. The parking attendant was arrested and the car involved in the accident has been recovered. ENS

2 docs on autopsy team of Kerala minor girl

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chikkamagaluru

THE autopsy of Kerala girl **Srinanda**, whose body was found on Friday in the forests of Chikkamagaluru, was conducted at the district hospital on Friday evening by a panel of two surgeons, deviating from standard procedure.

Given the seriousness of the case, senior police officials arranged for the autopsy to be carried out by surgeons Lohith and Jayalakshmi, with the entire process being videographed to ensure transparency and avoid any ambiguity.

Srinanda, a minor from Kerala, had gone missing on Tuesday evening while on a family trip to Manikyadhara Falls near BR Hills. A three-day intensive search by a joint team comprising police, fire and emergency services, forest personnel and SDRF yielded no results.

On the fourth day (Friday), her body was found in a crevice nearly 2,000 feet below the falls.

Preliminary findings indicate no evidence of foul play. According to police sources, the initial autopsy report attributes her death to severe head injuries sustained during the fall. Her body had suffered multiple injuries and fractures, and her clothes were torn, likely due to the impact with rocks, trees and bushes during the fall. Investigators believe the death was accidental rather than homicidal, though her parents have raised suspicions.

During initial investigation, police found that Srinanda had spoken on the phone for about 17 minutes before her disappearance, including a 15-minute call with a friend. It is suspected that a possible disagreement over mobile phone usage may have upset her, even though police are examining all angles. The exact cause of death will be confirmed only after the final autopsy report is submitted.

CRIME PATROL

Woman attacked by brother, nephew, dies

BENGALURU: A 55-year-old woman succumbed to injuries on Saturday night after battling for her life following an attack by her brother, his son and two others over a domestic dispute on March 25. The accused Manivannan, Mani Kiran, Maniraj and Abhishek were arrested by the Adugodi police after the incident. The deceased, Mageshwari, was a resident of Ambedkar Nagar in Adugodi. Manivannan was her younger brother. His son Mani Kiran is married to Mageshwari's grand daughter. Due to strained relationship, Kiran's wife had left him and stayed with Mageshwari. Kiran barged into the victim's house with his father Manivannan and two others, at around 7 am on March 25, to take his wife back with him. When Mageshwari resisted, she was attacked with a knife and an iron rod by the accused. Mageshwari was undergoing treatment since then.

Minor kills self as family opposes relationship

BENGALURU: 17-year-old PU student has died by suicide at her aunt's house near Nelamangala on Saturday. The deceased, Niveditha, from Madhugiri in Tumakuru was come to her aunt's house in Biragondanahalli for holidays after her first PU exams. She was in love with a boy from Badavanahalli in Madhugiri and her parents had opposed the relationship. Upset over this, she is said to have taken her life. The Thyamagondalu police have registered a case of unnatural death and the body was shifted to the Nelamangala government hospital for postmortem.

Helpline

If you are having suicidal thoughts, or are worried about a friend or need emotional support, someone is always there to listen. Call Sneha Foundation - 04424640050, Tele Manas - 14416 (available 24x7) or iCall, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' helpline - 02225521111, which is available Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 10 pm.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ
ನಂ.55, ನೆಲಮಹಡಿ, ಅಭಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣ ಭವನ, ರಿಸಲ್ದಾರ್‌ರಸ್ತೆ,
ಶೇಷಾದ್ರಿಪುರಂ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560020

No.KSDB/EE/No1.div/S.T/PB/IFT-19/CALL-3/2025-26/ Dated:-08.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 04 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ (ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ– 2, 3 & 4) ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ, ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

01. KSDB/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT426/Call-3
02. KSDB/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT436/Call-3
03. KSDB/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT437/Call-3

1. Last date & time for receipt of Tenders: **Dt: 18.04.2026 upto 05.00 PM**
2. Date & Time for opening of Technical Bid Date:-**22.04.2026 at 11.00 AM.**

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಥವಾ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ನಂ.1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಕೊಅಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

DIPR/CP/147/NR/2026-27

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the authorized officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** under the Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued **demand notices** to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Mortgagor(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Consentors(s) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notices, along with future interest as applicable incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. incurred till the date of payment and/or realisation.

Sr. No.	Loan No.	Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	13(2) Notice Date/ Outstanding Due (in Rs.) as on	Date/ Time & Type of Possession
1	45349420000308	1) Mr. Tabrez N, 2) Mrs. Venkatalakshmamma	12.01.2026 Rs.12,99,337.63 (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Ninety Nine Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Seven and Sixty Three Paisa Only) due as on 06-01-2026 and interest thereon	Date: 09-04-2026 Time: 02:10 P.M. Symbolic Possession
	Description of the Property: All that part and parcel of present property bearing No.49/65, Old Site No.15, present PID No.15290030310060022 5, situated at Dubbagottige Village, Thaggikuppe Grama Panchayath, Kasaba Hobli, Magadi Taluk, Ramanagara and **Bounded on: East by:** Property of Chinnamma & Yallamma, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Road, **South by:** House of Lakshmamma. Measuring East to West: 12.192 Mtrs. and North to South: 9.144 Mtrs. totally measuring 111.48 Sq.mtrs.			
2	46459430000700	1) Mr. Nanjappa, Also at: M/s. Shree Bhatteshwara Swamy Provision Store, 2) Mrs. Munichikkamma	08.01.2026 Rs.3,59,196.11 (Rupees Three Lakh Fifty Nine Thousand One Hundred Ninety Six and Eleven Paisa Only) due as on 04-01-2026 and interest thereon	Date: 10-04-2026 Time: 10:18 A.M Symbolic Possession
	Description of the Property: All that piece and parcel of the immovable residential Property bearing No.112/103, situated at Marasandra Village, Jala Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, presently comes under the limits of Marenahalli Village Panchayat and **Bounded by the: East by:** Vacant Place, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Government Cannel, **South by:** Narayanamma. Measuring 35 X 25 Feet. Totally Measuring 875 Sq.feet.			

Whereas the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the Borrower's mentioned herein above in particular and to the Public in general that the authorised officer of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** has **taken possession** of the properties/ secured assets described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the dates mentioned above. The Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors mentioned herein above in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid properties/ Secured Assets and any dealings with the said properties/ Secured assets will be subject to the charge of **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited.**

Place: Bangalore & Bangalore Rural
Date: 11.04.2026
Sd/- Authorised Officer,
For Jana Small Finance Bank Limited

JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK (A Scheduled Commercial Bank)
Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE III ADDL. PRL. JUDGE, FAMILY COURT, AT BENGALURU
G&W.C. No.: 98/2025

BETWEEN: Smt. SARIKA BALACHANDRA SHETTY,
Aged about 42 years W/o. Sri. Venkatesh Yadav, Presently residing at No. 151, 3rd cross, 5th Block, Banshankari 3rd stage, Bengaluru-560085
PETITIONER

AND:
Sri. VENKATESH YADAV,
Aged about 41 years, S/o. Late Sri. Damodharan, Resident of No. 57, 1st Cross, 2nd Stage, Michael Palyam, New Thippasandra, Bengaluru-560 075
RESPONDENT

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT

To,
Sri. Venkatesh Yadav, Aged about 41 years, S/o. Late Sri. Damodharan, Resident of No. 57, 1st Cross, 2nd Stage, Michael Palyam, New Thippasandra, Bengaluru-560 075.

Whereas, the above-named Petitioner has filed a Petition under section 6(a) of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 read with section 7 of Guardianship and wards Act 1890. The above case is posted on 03.06.2026 for your appearance. Hence you are hereby directed to appear before this Hon'ble court on the said date at 11.00 A.M either in person or through Counsel duly instructed. Failing which, the above case will be heard and determined in your absence placing you as ex-parte.

Giving under my hand and seal of this court on this 9th day of MARCH 2026

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
Sd/-
Senior Sheristeder
Family Court
Bengaluru

Sd/-
Advocate for Petitioner
B.N. NAGARAJA
AND ASSOCIATES Family Court, Bangalore
No.760, 16th Main, BSK 2nd Stage
Bangalore-560070.

IN THE COURT OF THE XIX ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AT BANGALORE
P & S C No. 142/2026 (CCH-18)

BETWEEN: Smt. SATHYABHAMA Aged about 85 years, W/o Late K.N. Prabhakara, R/at. Flat No.B-8, 1st Floor, Srushti Apartments, Srinivasapura Uttarahalli, Kengeri Road, Bangalore-560060.
...Petitioner
-Vs- Nil ...Respondents

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the petitioners above named have made to this court under SEC. 278 OF INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT for the grant of letter of administration in favour of the petitioner in respect of the schedule mentioned below. The below mentioned schedule was held by One late Roopashree W/o. late S. Sathish Rao, who expired on 23/06/2020. Petitioner is the mother of Late Smt. Roopashree.

Interested parties are hereby named to appear in this court in person or by pleader duly instructed **on 02nd day May 2026 at 11.00 AM** inform to show cause against the petitioners, failing which the application will be heard and declared as exparte

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Eastern portion of the site property bearing No.600, Municipal No.578/1/600, measuring east to west 20ft. North to South 30ft, in all measuring 600 Sq.ft. carved out of Sy Nos. 77 to 90, 105 to 119/1, 5, 4, 122, 147 to 165 and 273 of Halage vaderahalli Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk along with a residential building standing thereon and Bounded, on the:

East by : Site No.599, **West by :** Property belongs to Sri. Annaiachari, **North by :** Property belongs to Sri.Nagachari, **South by :** Road.

Given under hand and seal of this court on this the 27th day of March 2026.

By Order of the Court, Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court, Bangalore
Advocate's name & address :
N.M. BHAT & ASSOCIATES, Advocate
Off: No. 64, 71st Cross, 5th Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-10.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **Sri. RAGHAVENDRA NADIGER**, 33 yrs, S/o. Dattatraya Nadiger, No.2669, 12th Main E Block, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-10, is intending to purchase below mentioned property from **Sri.UMESHA G.V**, 43 yrs, S/o. Veerabhadrappa, No.45, Prathiksha Nilaya, 2nd Cross Road, Suvarna Nagara, Doddabidarakallu, Bangalore - 73.

Any person/s having/asserting any right, title, interest, claim over the Schedule property, may contact the undersigned with all relevant papers/title deeds and submit their objections in writing, immediately, failing which our client would proceed to complete the sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Residential Site No.1125, EPID No.1011028894, in HMT Employees CHBSL, now KRS Gowda Extn, situated at Nagasandra & Nelakadhirenahalli Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, measuring East to West 40 feet & North to South 60 feet, and bounded on East by Site No.1126, West by Site No.1124, North by Road and South by Site No.1154.

Date: 13.04.2026. Place: Bengaluru.

S. RAMESH KUMAR, Advocate
No.231, 1st Floor, Lakshmi Nivasa, S.C. Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore - 09. Mobile: 9845359588

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TELEMATICS
सी-डॉट C-DOT

Advt. No. C-DOT/HR/REC/2026/03/01 Date: 13 April 2026

VACANCY NOTICE
NOTICE FOR THE VACANCIES OF THE FOLLOWING POSTS AT C-DOT

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for filling up the below mentioned posts at C-DOT:

Sl.	Name of Post	Mode	Pay Level as per 7 CPC	No. of vacancy	Location
1.	Scientist-B/C	On Direct Recruitment	Level 10/11	14	Delhi/ Bengaluru
2.	Consultant - Vigilance	On Contractual Basis	As per Govt. norms	2	01-Delhi 01-Bengaluru

Interested & Eligible Candidates may apply and submit their applications in online mode only. For detailed information including the Job description and application process, please visit the 'Careers section of the C-DOT website:

https://www.cdot.in/cdotweb/web/careers.php?lang=en#current_openings

Last date of application is 30 days from the date of publication in Employment News (English). All Government candidates are to route their application through proper channel as per details given in the website.

Sd/-
Head -P&HR and Legal

CBC 06268/12/0001/2627

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WHEN YOU REACH THE END OF YOUR ROPE, TIE A KNOT IN IT AND HANG ON

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KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No: EEE/PNDB/AEE-4/AE-1/2026-27/68-69 **Date: 09.04.2026**

NOTIFICATION

KPTCL have formulated a scheme under section 67 of the Electricity Supply Act 2003 and the same is herewith published in pursuance of section 67(2) of said Act for information of the general public. Particulars of the scheme are as follows:

1. Name of the Work: Establishing 2x20MVA, 66/11kV sub-station in Yarappanahalli at survey no. 21 in Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru urban district along with Running of 66kV S/C 1000Sq.mm UG Cable from existing 220/66/11kV Devanahalli KIADB Hardware Park sub-station to proposed 66/11kV Yarappanahalli sub-station for a route distance of 9.865 km and Construction of 01 no. of terminal bay at 220/66/11kV Devanahalli KIADB Hardware Park sub-station for terminating the 66kV UG cable in Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District.

Proposed 66kV UG cable line is passing through areas: From existing 220/66/11kV Devanahalli KIADB Hardware Park sub-station via Konakanahalli Road – Bagaluru Road – Marenahalli Road – Marasandra Reserve Forest Road – up to proposed 66/11kV S/s at Yarappanahalli. **Approximate Project Cost:** Rs. 12426.19 Lakhs,

2. Name of the Work: Establishing 2x20MVA, 66/11kV sub-station at survey no. 6 in Banahalli in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural district along with Running of 66kV S/C 1000Sq.mm UG Cable tapping from existing 66kV Malur – Jadigenahalli S/c Line 2 via CTT near ITC Factory to proposed 66/11kV Banahalli sub-station for a route distance of 6.255 km in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

Proposed 66kV UG cable line is passing through areas: From proposed CTT near ITC Factory in existing 66kV Malur – Jadigenahalli S/c Line 2 tapping point near Sri Raghavendra Govu Ashrama via Malur – Hosakote Road – Thimmapura Road – Brigade Cherry Blossom Road – Banahalli Road up to proposed 66/11kV Banahalli sub-station.

Approximate Project Cost: Rs. 8320.67 Lakhs.

3. Name of the Work: Establishing 2x20MVA, 66/11kV sub-station in Thathanur at survey no. 147 in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural district along with Running of 66kV S/C 1000Sq.mm UG Cable from existing 220/66/11kV Sarjapura sub-station to proposed 66/11kV Thathanur sub-station for a route distance of 9.612 km and Construction of 01 no. of terminal bay at 220/66/11kV Sarjapura sub-station for terminating the 66kV UG cable in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

Proposed 66kV UG cable line is passing through areas: From existing 220/66/11kV Sarjapura sub-station via Sarjapura Road – Chikka Thirupathi Road – Thindlu Circle – RRL Nature Wood Apartments – Mahal Chowdadenahalli Village Road – Champion International School Road – Mugaluru Village Road – Thathanuru Main Road – up to proposed 66/11kV Thathanuru sub-station. **Approximate Project Cost:** Rs. 11562.02 Lakhs.

4. Name of the Work: Establishing 2x20MVA, 66/11kV sub-station in Bommenahalli at survey no. 31 in Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru urban district along with Running of 66kV S/C 1000Sq.mm UG Cable from existing 66/11kV Mandur sub-station to proposed 66/11kV Bommenahalli sub-station for a route distance of 2.680 km and Construction of 01 no. of terminal bay at 66/11kV Mandur Sub-Station for terminating the 66kV UG cable in Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District.

Proposed 66kV UG cable line is passing through areas: From existing 66/11kV Mandur sub-station via Budigere Road–Mandur Govt. Hospital Road-Sri Sai Ventures Road–Bommenahalli Lake Road–up to proposed 66/11kV Bommenahalli sub-station.

Approximate Project Cost: Rs. 4571.46 Lakhs.

5. Name of the Work: Establishing 2x20MVA, 66/11kV sub-station in M Sathyawara at survey no. 28 in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural district along with Running of 66kV 1000 Sq.mm UG Cable LILO from Proposed CTT in existing 66kV Ekarajapura – Budigere DC Line to proposed 66/11kV M Sathyawara sub-station for a route distance of 0.965 km in Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

Proposed 66kV UG cable line is passing through areas: From proposed CTT at Service Road of Dabaspet-Chennai STR Road in existing 66kV Ekarajapura – Budigere DC line to proposed 66/11kV M Sathyawara sub-station via Service Road of Dabaspet – Chennai STR Road – M Sathyawara to Ekarajapura Road – M Sathyawara Road – up to proposed 66/11kV M Sathyawara sub-station. **Approximate Project Cost:** Rs. 4174.72 Lakhs

The Corporation shall have and exercise all powers, which the telegraph authorities possess under Para (iii) of Indian Telegraph Act 1885 (13 of 1885) for implementation of the above schemes. Any objection/discrepancies to the above schemes should be sent to the Executive Engineer (Ele), Projects Division North, KPTCL, A.R. Circle, Bengaluru-09 within 15 Days from the date of publication of this notification for consideration by the corporation.

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (Ele) Projects Division North, KPTCL, A.R. Circle, Bangalore-09.**

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

KARNATAKA

04 BENGALURU MONDAY 13.04.2026

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Athani MLA Laxman Savadi on Sunday took an indirect swipe at Gokak BJP MLA Ramesh Jarkiholi, suggesting that those who are speculating about Savadi's potential entry into the BJP may, in turn, soon find themselves shifting allegiance to the JDS

WHEN WAR ENTERS KITCHEN

While disruption in LPG supply has impacted multiple sectors, the worst hit are the hotel, hospitality and transport sectors, forcing them to look for alternative energy sources. The situation has relatively eased, but return to normalcy would take time, write **Indra S** and **Anubhab Roy**

Domestic LPG supply stabilising in K'taka, focus shifts to alternatives

INDRA S @ Bengaluru

THE ripple effects of a distant war are now being felt in household kitchens across Karnataka. What began as geopolitical tension in West Asia quickly translated into a disruption of LPG supply chains, exposing vulnerabilities while also prompting adaptation at multiple levels.

According to industry representatives, the crisis originated from disruptions near the Strait of Hormuz following escalating conflict involving Israel, Iran and the United States of America. Shipping delays affected LPG imports, triggering a cascading impact on domestic distribution. Oil marketing companies (OMCs) responded with rationing measures, including a 25-day gap between refills in urban areas and up to 45 days in rural regions.

Captain Harish, an LPG distributor, underscored the direct global-local linkage. "The moment the war stops, things will begin to stabilise," he said, pointing to how closely fuel logistics are tied to geopolitical developments.

A key factor that worsened the situation was panic booking. "Earlier, for example, we handled about 500 bookings a day and supplied the same. Suddenly, bookings doubled," he elaborated.

The moment the West Asia war stops, things will begin to stabilise, says Captain Harish, an LPG distributor | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

This surge created an artificial spike in demand that already-strained supply systems could not accommodate. While panic booking has now reduced, its aftereffects continue to linger.

The urban-rural divide also unfolded during the crisis. In rural areas, where alternative fuels like firewood are more accessible, panic was relatively limited, which partly explained the longer 45-day refill cycles. "In cities, people book immediately after a cylinder is empty, sometimes even earlier, which creates pressure," he added.

Supply, however, continues to be allocated based on historical consumption patterns rather than real-time demand, limiting responsiveness during sudden surges. Urban centres, with higher LPG dependence, bore the brunt of the disruption, Captain Harish said.

Kumar LG, secretary, All-India LPG Distributors Federation (Karnataka Circle), pointed to policy rigidities. "Even if supply improves, bookings cannot be made before the mandated gap," he said, referring to centralised software systems that enforce refill cycles. He added that distributors are receiving barely 80% of the required stock, despite rising demand, further widening the supply-demand mismatch.

Caught between policy constraints and public frustration, distributors have become the face of the crisis. Reports of confrontations, delayed deliveries and mounting backlogs underline the strain at the last mile, compounded by multiple layers of oversight from oil companies and regulators. Yet, solutions are within reach, he said, adding that even a marginal increase in cylinder allocation could significantly reduce backlogs. A return to normalcy, they estimate, could take as little as 15 days once supply routes stabilise. However, concerns persist that damaged refineries in conflict zones may take years to rebuild.

Distributors also stress the need to diversify energy sources. Alternatives such as piped natural gas (PNG), biogas and emerging hydrogen-based solutions could reduce dependence on imported LPG, though they require policy support and infrastructure investment.

At a behavioural level, the crisis highlights the need for responsible consumption. Distributors stress that avoiding panic-driven demand can significantly ease pressure on supply chains. For now, Karnataka's LPG shortages serve as a stark reminder: in an interconnected world, the distance between a war zone and a household kitchen is shorter than it seems.

Despite LPG crunch, drop in flights, transport holds steady

INDRA S @ Bengaluru

THE impact of the West Asia conflict is now visible on Karnataka's transport economy with direct impact on the availability of auto LPG to the indirect impact of the war on the taxi services from the airport.

Autorickshaws, a vital component of the mobility network, rely heavily on LPG. With supply disruptions triggered by shipping delays near key global routes, availability has tightened. Industry voices warn that while petrol and diesel remain stable for now, LPG shortages have already strained daily operations.

Autorickshaws were the first to feel the impact. The situation has eased but a few private outlets have shut.

This crisis has coincided with another major disruption – the sharp decline in international flight traffic. According to Radha Krishna Holla of Karnataka State Travel Operators Association (KSTOA), Karnataka typically receives over 30 daily flights from West Asian hubs such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Muscat, landing in Bengaluru and Mangaluru. Many of these routes, however, especially high-frequency services from Dubai, have been reduced or suspended.

He pointed to the cascading impact: "There is more than a 50% drop in international passengers. These travellers are usually high spenders, and their absence has hit tourism, hotels and transport services directly." The timing has worsened the blow, as the disruption coincides with the peak summer travel season, when inbound travel to South India is typically high.

For transport operators – particularly those in the luxury and tourism segments, the consequences have been severe. "For nearly 40 days, business has been close to zero," Holla said, highlighting how reduced passenger movement has translated into idle fleets and stalled revenues. Even short-duration travel has declined, as flights have become limited or prohibitively expensive.

The crisis has also exposed structural vulnerabilities within the sector. Much of Karnataka's transport ecosystem operates within the unorganised space, making it less visible in policy responses. "When large corporations are hit, it reflects in markets. But when small operators suffer, it goes unnoticed," Holla observed.

In response, industry stakeholders have appealed to the Union Government for relief measures, including loan moratoriums, tax deadline extensions, and interest-free credit support to sustain operations. Simultaneously, operators are exploring alternatives such as CNG through vehicle retrofitting. However, inadequate infrastructure and long queues at refuelling stations have limited its effectiveness.

Despite the challenges, there is cautious optimism. Fuel supplies for essential sectors remain stable, and stakeholders believe that a geopolitical resolution could quickly restore normalcy. "Peace and ceasefire are essential," Holla stressed, underlining the direct link between global stability and local livelihoods.

Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said, "We depend largely on imports for diesel and petrol. Supplies from countries like Russia are continuing, but global developments and policy decisions abroad could influence availability."

At present, there is no immediate shortage of diesel, which is the primary fuel for most segments of the transport sector, including buses and goods vehicles. "As of now, there is no issue with diesel supply. Operations are continuing as usual," he said, adding that we cannot predict how things will evolve if the situation continues for a longer period.

Hotels brace for a new normal, dwindling tourist numbers

ANUBHAB ROY @ Bengaluru

THE West Asia war, and the consequent closure of Strait of Hormuz– a critical trade passage – has spelled an unfortunate omen for India's fuel influx. This disruption meant that critical fuel in most of its forms, including petrol, diesel, LPG, aviation fuel, and more, has been of short supply. The LPG shortage in particular led domestic usage to be prioritised, leaving hotels and restaurants in Bengaluru and other districts of Karnataka – all of which require LPG for commercial use – in a soup.

It is the relatively smaller hotels that faced the brunt, according to PC Rao, president, Bangalore Hotels Association. "During the beginning of the conflict, which was the first week of March, small and medium hotels in Bengaluru (and Karnataka at large) did not get any LPG supply. Their stature meant that they could not make alternate arrangements as well. During those initial days, they were forced to shut down," he said. Rao also mentioned that some hotels in the city tried to obtain LPG from private suppliers.

According to estimates provided by both Rao and Karnataka State Hotel Association member Subramanya Holla, about 40,000 – 45,000 cylinders of LPG are required each day by hotels in Karnataka.

In the initial phases of the crisis, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had stated that the daily demand from the state's hotels was of 50,000 cylinders. Holla said that only 50% of the demand was being met by the State Government. "Karnataka's hotels are receiving only half the number of cylinders required from the State Government. This is where the black market comes in with inflated, unaffordable prices," he added.

A key aspect of this situation, according to Holla, is the fact that most of the state's supply is restricted to Bengaluru, leading hotels in other districts to a state of disregard. "Hotels at the taluk level, beyond Bengaluru, are suffering the most," Holla said, adding, "But many of them have opted for firewood. Wood is of ample supply in rural districts, and so is land. Usage of firewood kilns has been beneficial in terms of meeting the gap between LPG demand and supply."

Since the crisis started, according to Rao, the state's hotel industry has lost about Rs 1,000 crore. The amount is estimated to have been lost from a host of sources, including food and beverages, accommodation, hotel bookings (for marriages or other ceremonies), event bookings, and more. "It is anyone's guess as to when the situation will stabilise. The war's effect has also caused tourism to take a hit, which was a great source of revenue for the state's hotels," Rao said.

Demand for LPG cylinders in Karnataka per day

Domestic **3,52,921**

Commercial **44,000**

LPG demand per day by restaurants in Karnataka: **44,000** cylinders

LPG supplied by State Government: ~50% of demand **(~23,000)**

Estimated loss: ₹1,000 cr

Remaining accounted by: Black market, firewood, electrical/solar sources

Karnataka's hotels are receiving only half the number of cylinders required from the State Government. This is where the black market comes in with inflated, unaffordable prices

- Karnataka State Hotel Association member Subramanya Holla

Auto LPG Supply Position In Karnataka

64.9 MT/day (Current average supply)

57.6 MT/day (Pre-conflict average)

Supply Increased Despite Crisis

In the backdrop of the ongoing war, we have to bear with the situation. We are supplying the gas cylinders distributed by the Central Government on time without harassing the people. We have no role in this....

- KH Muniyappa, Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Minister

Congress MLAs off to Delhi to meet party bosses

Top brass to decide on cabinet reshuffle: CM

Chikkamagaluru: CM Siddaramaiah reiterated that there was nothing wrong in legislators who are aspiring to become ministers visiting Delhi. He, however, said that the Congress high command will take a final call on the cabinet reshuffle. "Cabinet rejig is pending... elections to five state assemblies, and the Parliament budget session could have delayed the reshuffle process," the CM told reporters in NR Pura. Regarding reported anti-party activities by a few party members, the CM stated that his political secretary, Naseer Ahmed, is yet to tender his resignation, but he may do so soon. On the recent Davanagere South bypoll, Siddaramaiah said that the Congress has not accepted defeat. "We will win for sure. Seeking Naseer's resignation for alleged anti-party activities has nothing to do with our victory or loss. MLC Saleem Ahmad had expressed displeasure over anti-party activities of a few in the Davanagere bypoll. But he never said that Congress will lose. Despite anti-party activities by a few, Congress will win," the CM said.

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

A DELEGATION of 25-30 senior Congress MLAs led by chief whip in the Assembly Ashok M Pattan on Sunday embarked on a trip to the national capital where they are expected to meet the party high command, and seek cabinet berths during the reshuffle.

The timing of their visit, just after bypolls to Bagalkot and Davanagere South are over and ahead of results on May 4, has evoked curiosity as to whether they are lobbying for Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to continue in the top post for the remaining two years. It is being regarded as a precursor to Siddaramaiah's visit to Delhi as he too is keen to get the nod of the party high command, especially LoP in the LS Rahul Gandhi.

With expectations of a cabinet reshuffle, DCM DK Shivakumar's camp is also likely to rekindle its demand for a change in the CM's post. Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara, who is ready to throw his hat in the ring, recently stated that Siddaramaiah will continue as CM. Pattan, known to be a Siddaramaiah loyalist, has been reiterating the same. After holding a meeting of the group of MLAs who have won more than three times, and with the CM's consent, Pattan led the delegation to Delhi. They are of the opinion that since the government has been in power for three years, the incumbent ministers should be relieved of their posts to give opportunities for others, in the interest of the party's prospects in the 2028 assembly polls. The MLAs' delegation is likely to stay in Delhi for a couple of days and meet AICC general secretaries KC Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala on Monday. Since AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge is in Bengaluru, they will wait for him to return to Delhi, sources said.

A few of the Congress MLAs from Karnataka at Delhi airport on Sunday | EXPRESS

The senior MLAs who landed in Delhi are TB Jayachandra, AR Krishna Murthy, Beluru Gopalakrishna, Shanthana Goudar, K Shadakshari, Puttaranga Shetty, Raghavendra Hitnal, SN Narayanaswamy, among others. Malavalli MLA PM Narendraswamy backed out, claiming he was busy with his daughter's wedding, while Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna, a Shivakumar loyalist, also stepped back.

Minority rumbles in state Congress: Former mayor asks MLC to resign

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Davanagere

IN the backdrop of adverse news being spread in Davanagere South bypolls, the Congress high command directed three-time MLC Abdul Jabbar to resign from the post of president of the KPCC minorities department.

Jabbar, who was demanding the party ticket from the constituency, went missing till the penultimate day of campaigning, and resurfaced on the last day and conducted a press conference in Davanagere. He claimed he had not been invited to campaign by district incharge minister SS Mallikarjun, so he had remained in the shadows. To this, Congress workers questioned whether there was a need to invite a sitting MLC, nominated by the Congress, to campaign.

Former mayor of Davanagere K Chaman Sab alleged that Jabbar had held a press conference in order to give a lame excuse, and had not worked for the party. "Those who have gained from the Congress have backstabbed the party, we are not in Muslim League or RSS, our party treats every caste, religion and community equally. As per the party's principle, the ticket was given to the grandson of Dr Shamanur Shivashankarappa," he added.

He gave examples of Tanveer Sait getting the ticket on the demise of Aziz Sait, Kaneez Fathima contesting after Qamarul Islam, and UT Khader getting his father UT Fareed's seat.

Chaman Sab alleged that neither Jabbar nor his followers had campaigned, and instead stayed away from party events, which amounts to anti-party activities. Chaman advised Jabbar to resign as MLC too.

Earlier, Jabbar had held a press meet and announced his resignation from the party position, after getting a directive from the AICC. With him, vice-president Mohammed Siraj, secretary Abdul Ghani Taheer, Hussain Ukkadagatri and Asif Junaidhi also announced their resignations. Prior to this, DCM Shivakumar had dissolved the KPCC minorities department.

CONG MARGIN MAY DIP, BUT SURE OF WIN: SATISH

DAVANAGERE: Congress' lead in the Davanagere South bypoll may decrease by 20%, but the party will win comfortably, Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi told reporters in Belagavi. He also advised Horticulture Minister SS Mallikarjun to undertake damage control in the constituency in the coming days and ensure that the government's programmes are delivered to everyone. He said that the minority community has suffered. "They should have got a ticket. It is not wrong for the community, which has a population of 70,000 in the constituency, to have asked for a ticket. Therefore, in this bypoll, they may or may not have voted for BJP and SDPI," he said, adding the Congress will win both the Bagalkot and Davanagere South.

DKS ACCEPTS JABBAR'S RESIGNATION

BENGALURU: Deputy CM, DK Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress president, has accepted the resignation of the party's minority cell chairman Abdul Jabbar. Shivakumar also said that the minority cell committee formed under Jabbar's leadership has been dissolved with immediate effect, and steps would be taken to constitute a new committee soon.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday expressed deep sorrow over the passing away of legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle, describing her death as a great loss to the Indian film industry. He called her death a loss of rich musical treasure for both older and younger generations

Women's quota aimed to cut TN representation: Stalin

Promises increase in buses for free travel for women if DMK returns to power

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Ramanathapuram

TAMIL NADU Chief Minister MK Stalin on Sunday alleged betrayal of south India by the BJP-led union government and claimed it attempted to lower representation for Tamil Nadu by showing the proposed "women reservation" as reason.

He alleged that the Centre was attempting to punish states including Tamil Nadu that successfully implemented population control programmes and contributed to the nation's growth.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin greets supporters during a morning walk as part of his election campaign ahead of the state assembly elections, at Paramakudi, in Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu, on Sunday | PTI

Addressing an election rally at Paramakudi near here, Stalin said all the democratic forces in the country will oppose this proposal. "Does AIADMK chief Palaniswami have the courage to oppose and question this injustice? Further, speaking on fishermen's welfare, he said growing seaweed would be encouraged, and without directly naming Sri Lanka, he asserted that the Union government would be urged to take back Katchatheevu.

He announced that buses earmarked for fare-free travel for women will be increased after forming the Dravidian model 2.0 government.

Hailing his government's schemes as initiatives that find a place in history, he said such programmes also create new history. With just 10 days left for the Assembly elections, Stalin appealed to party workers to intensify the work on the ground, saying the people of the state have already made up their mind to bring the Dravidian Model back to power. In a letter addressed to party workers posted on X, Stalin said, "The benefits of five years of Dravidian Model governance and the people's expectations from the upcoming Dravidian Model 2.0 are visible in every constituency."

Stating that over the past year, party workers had reached all 75,000 polling stations across Tamil Nadu through door-to-door outreach, he urged the workers to distribute pamphlets, ensure every vote in every village and treat every seat – including those contested by alliance partners – as their own. "Go into every constituency thinking that I am the one standing there," he said.

With inputs from PTI

'ALLIANCE NOT IDEOLOGICAL, WE WILL PROTECT MINORITIES'

NAGAPATTINAM: Defending its alliancewith BJP, AIADMK general secretary **Edappadi K Palaniswami** said the party will not compromise on its principles and will protect minorities. Addressing election campaigns for NDA candidates in Nagapattinam and Mayiladuthurai, Palaniswami said alliances are purely electoral arrangements and did not amount to ideological compromises. "There is no political heir in AIADMK, but in the DMK, leadership remains within the family, No one outside their family can rise to positions of power," he alleged, adding that his party provided opportunities for grassroots workers.

'SOBHA PAID MONEY TO INFLUENCE VOTERS DURING LS POLLS TOO'

ALAPPUZHA: The controversy surrounding BJP leader **Sobha Surendran** over allegations of vote-buying in Palakkad has intensified with suspended party leader Bindu Vinayakumar raising a series of fresh and serious accusations. Bindu, who was on Saturday suspended from BJP's primary membership, has alleged that Shobha had distributed money to influence voters not only in the ongoing Palakkad election but during the Alappuzha Lok Sabha election period as well. She claimed that the death of Justin, a photographer associated with Sobha, was suspicious and demanded a comprehensive probe into the incident. Bindu also criticised the state BJP leadership, alleging that they are "afraid" of Sobha and have failed to act despite repeated complaints.

Centre mulls using post offices for Jan Aushadi Kendras

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Union Government is exploring a proposal to use post office infrastructure to set up Jan Aushadhi Kendras and take help of India Post's network for last-mile delivery of medicines. Rajya Sabha MP Lahar Singh Siroya had written to Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia in this regard.

Siroya's idea has been appreciated for its potential to improve access to affordable medicines, especially in rural areas. The proposal has been referred to the Department of Pharmaceuticals for feasibility and further action to follow after consultations.

"It has been informed that the suggestion to utilise post office infrastructure for establishing Jan Aushadhi Kendras and to leverage India Post's extensive logistics and last-mile delivery network for transportation and doorstep delivery of medicines is appreciated. The proposal has potential to enhance access to affordable medicines, particularly in rural areas. The matter has been taken up with the Department of Pharmaceuticals to explore the feasibility of such a collaboration. Siroya said he also spoke in Parliament on utilising the Department of Posts network to expand the infrastructure of Jan Aushadi Kendras to remote corners of the nation. "I had personally met Union Minister for Communications, and appealed to him to consider the idea. I am happy and grateful to him that he has responded very positively to the idea and has written the following in his letter to me," he said.

Kerala suicide: Audio alleges insults, threat by teachers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Kannur

AN audio clip believed to be of **Nithin Raj RL**, 22, a first-year BDS student who died by suicide at Kannur Dental College in Anjarakandy last week, surfaced in the media on Sunday, accusing the private institute's teachers of insulting him and his family and also threatening him with violence.

In the voice note reportedly sent to a friend, Nithin, a resident of Puthukulangara in Thiruvananthapuram who hailed from a SC community, alleged that he was subjected to repeated verbal abuse by teachers, including being called an "idiot". He claimed a teacher threatened him with violence if he stepped outside the college gate. He accused another teacher of insulting his mother, including making remarks about a surgery she underwent, and deliberately reducing his marks. The answer sheet was then shown to classmates and he was ridiculed and humiliated on its basis, Nithin alleged in the clip.

The contents of the voice note appeared to back the parents' allegations that Nithin was subjected to caste-based discrimination, insulted based on his colour and financial standing, and also ragged by senior students of the college.

"We think the voice clip belongs to Nithin. Further examination will be conducted as the investigation progresses," said Kannur city police commissioner Nidhinraj J. "We have recorded the statements of Nithin's friends and family and examined his chats as well as voice notes. Detailed statements from his roommates and hostelmates will be recorded," the commissioner said.

Maintaining that all the individuals against whom allegations have been raised were arraigned, the officer said sections related to abetment of suicide and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act have been added to the FIR. "The injury caused by the fall led to Nithin's death. There is no doubt about this being a suicide. What led to it has to be found," he said.

During investigation, they also found out that Nithin had taken loans from online apps and faced threats, Nidhinraj said.

IMPROVING REVENUE

Karnataka uses 3D drone survey to detect property tax evasion

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Belagavi

THE Karnataka government announced the implementation of advanced 3D drone technology to conduct accurate mapping and assessment of properties across urban local bodies, including Belagavi. The initiative is aimed at tackling widespread property tax evasion and improving municipal revenues. All residential and commercial properties will be surveyed using drones to detect unregistered or underreported structures. This will ensure proper valuation and fair tax collection. To strengthen tax collection, the government will also involve women's self-help groups, who will be assigned the responsibility of collecting property tax. These groups will receive a 5% incentive for their services, encouraging community participation and improving efficiency.

Authorities said that incomplete records, undervaluation, and deliberate misreporting have been major reasons behind low property tax recovery.

In addition, a new automated system will be introduced to link property registration offices with municipal bodies. Whenever a new property is registered, the concerned urban local body will receive notification, reducing the chances of properties escaping the tax net.

The government is also exploring alternative revenue sources such as professional tax, advertisement fees, sanitation and solid waste management charges, parking fees, and a share in GST revenue. Further, reforms in the water supply system are planned, with a focus on making water meters mandatory for all connections. Currently, a majority of urban local bodies have less than 50% metered connections, and the goal is to achieve full coverage.

This comprehensive approach is expected to increase transparency, reduce revenue leakages, and improve the financial stability of urban local bodies, enabling better infrastructure and civic services.

India made giant leaps since Aryabhatta: Shux

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

INDIAN Space Research Organisation (ISRO) astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla on Sunday said that India is a nation that has made immense progress since the launch of the Aryabhatta satellite to the current preparations for the Gaganyaan mission.

Shukla, who along with ISRO chairman V Narayanan, released a pair of commemorative postage stamps conceived by India Post to celebrate India's human spaceflight programme, said, "How far we have come in the past decades tells us where we want to go."

Shukla highly lauded ISRO for its contributions, adding that it had always been a symbol of aspiration for the entire country. "Even before 2019, when I had not joined ISRO yet, it was a shining beacon guiding us with the hope that everything is possible. Hopefully, very soon, we will be able to launch our own astronauts on our own rockets, on our own launch vehicles, into space," he said.

ISRO Chairman Dr V Narayanan (centre), flanked by Chief Postmaster General K Prakash and Gaganyatri Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, and others release a postage stamp on India's Human Space Programme at the GPO in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

While orbiting Earth during the Axiom-04 mission, Shukla spoke to children in India on the ground, answering their questions. Likewise, many schoolchildren from Bengaluru were present at the inauguration to ask him questions about his journey, to which he obliged. He elaborated on how different a capsule pilot is from an aircraft pilot (having been both). Moon remains at the centre of India's focus at the moment, especially with the upcoming Gaganyaan mission, he said.

EXPRESS READ

Renew deal with IndiGo: BYR to Min

SHIVAMOGGA: MP BY Raghavendra has urged Infrastructure Minister MB Patil to immediately intervene and take steps to prevent the discontinuation of the Bengaluru-Shivamogga-Bengaluru IndiGo service from May 1. In a letter to the minister, the MP cautioned that halting the service would impact lakhs of people across Shivamogga, Haveri, Davanagere, Chikkamagaluru and Uttara Kannada, besides adversely affecting Malnad's economy. Raghavendra said the Rs 450-crore Shivamogga airport has handled over 2,400 flights and more than one lakh passengers within two years of its inauguration, demonstrating its strong viability. The MP also proposed a revised framework with financial support, extension for at least two years, exploring alternate airlines if required and examining cost reduction under the UDAN scheme.

Govt school in Udupi introduces AI teacher

DIVYA CUTINHO @ Udupi

THE 111-year-old Vandse Government Higher Primary School at Byndoor in Kundapur taluk, Udupi, introduced a generative AI teacher robot, which is the first such initiative in a government school in Karnataka.

IRIS, developed by Makerlabs Edutech under the NITI Aayog's Atal Tinkering Lab project, was first introduced at KTCT Higher Secondary School in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, two years ago.

"Our school inaugurated the saree-clad humanoid to promote interactive learning. It is not an alternative to teachers, but teacher-friendly. The AI-enabled voice assistant supports interactive learning in over 20 languages, and we intend to utilise the facility from the next academic year.

Teachers of Vandse Government Higher Primary School inaugurate the AI teacher at Byndoor

A few private schools launched the facility earlier, and ours is the first government school in the state. We have installed projectors, smart interactive boards and a computer lab. Our focus is on technology-based learning on par with the private schools," said Uday Kumar Shetty, secretary of Shri Mookambika Charitable Trust that has adopted the school, adding that they have invested Rs 3.5 lakh for the robot.

Shetty said that for its effective functioning, they must ensure there is a proper internet connection and power supply. Makerlabs Edutech staff operate the robot if necessary. The trust has invested around Rs 3 crore to improve the school infrastructure, including new classrooms, a solar system, a school bus, etc., to prevent it from shutting down when admissions were zero. English medium education was also introduced, after which admissions increased.

The authorities are hopeful of an increase in student strength after the introduction of the AI teacher, and already enquiries for admissions have increased. Presently, as many as 334 students from classes 1 to 7 have enrolled in the school with 15 teachers.

NOTICE FOR DISPOSAL OF MEDICAL RECORDS

Public are hereby informed that Rangalakshmi Netralaya proposes to permanently dispose the Inpatient Medical Records (non MLC) from year 2016 to 2020.

A copy of the same will be issued to the concerned person of the patient on written consent with a proper Government Identity proof, to be addressed to the The Medical Records Officer-MRD within 45 days of this notice.

Hospital will not comply with any request thereafter, as all records would have been destroyed.

Date: 13.4.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Medical Records Department
Rangalakshmi Netralaya
Yelahanka New Town
Bengaluru - 560 064
080 - 2846 3544, 95350 97713

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that, my client Smt. Kavya.S has entered with an unregistered Sale Agreement (Agreement to Sell) and the same was executed on 05.04.2026 with Sri. Ajith.S.Shimpi and Smt Anjana Shrikanth.P. Shimpi.Hence, this paper publication to the general public.

In this regard it is hereby notified that if any person/s or institute/institutions or anybody as sort of claim or objections or interest or title in respect of the Schedule Property, such person/s, institute/institutions, shall file their objections or claims with documents pertaining to the below Schedule Property and against the proposed sale transaction with the above said person within 7 days from the date of this Public Notice. In the event of non receiving of any objections or claim from anybody else within the specified time my client shall proceed to complete the sale transaction presuming that there is no such interest or title or claim or objections from anybody else over the below mentioned Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing vacant Site No3556, formed by the B.D.A, situated at Kumaraswamy Layout, 2nd Stage, Bangalore, measuring East to West 38 ft, North to South 20 ft, totally measuring 760 Sq. Ft, bounded on:-

East By : Site No. 3476, West By : Road, North By : Site No. 3557, South By : Site No. 3555.

Sri. Dhruva Kumar .K.N, Advocate
#1086, 8th Cross, 5th Block, HMT Layout, Nagasandra, Bengaluru-560073.
Mob. : 73385 46703

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby notified that my client by name Sri. K.R. Shivananda S/o late K.V. Ramappa is intending to purchase the immovable property bearing PID No.22-37-12/6/2, earlier Municipal site No.12/6/2, 1st Cross Road, Kodi Basavana Temple Road, Rajajinagar 6th Block, Bangalore, which is more-fully mentioned below as schedule property, from B.S. Krishna S/o Subbaraju R/at #34, 1st Cross, Kirloskar Colony, West of Cord Road, Bengaluru-560079 and Sandeep Suri S/o G. Suryanarayanan R/at A109, Wilson Manor Apartment, 13th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bengaluru-560027. Any person has any claim or any right over the schedule property in any manner, he or she or they may contact me in person or in writing with due evidence within 15 days from the date of this notification. After which period of time, if no valid response is received by any person, my client shall proceed to purchase the schedule property and my client shall not be held responsible for any such unwarranted claim.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable vacant property with small 100 sqft shed bearing PID No.22-37-12/6/2, earlier Municipal site No.12/6/2, 1st Cross Road, Kodi Basavana Temple Road, Rajajinagar 6th Block, Bangalore, measuring East-West on the northern side 66 feet (20.09 meters) and on the southern side 58 feet (17.67 meters); North-South on the eastern side 66 feet (20 meters) and on the western side 58 feet (17.67 meters) in all totally measuring 3790.102 sqft (Three Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Point One Zero Two square feet) or 352 sqmt (Three Fifty Two square meters) and together with all appurtenances thereto situated to, whether situated under, on or above the surface and bounded on:-

East By : Private Property, West By : Kodi Basavana Temple Road, North By : Road, South By : Kodi Basavana Temple Property.

Krishnaiah. S, Advocate
No.15, Attur-Kempanahalli Main Road, Near Clarion Hotel at Attur Lake, Yelahanka, Bangalore-560 064. (M) 9448101932.
Date : 12.04.2026

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JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) | **Registered Office:** The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No.10/1, 11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore-560071.

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002.

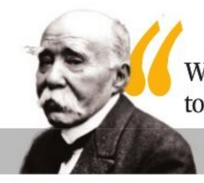
Whereas you the below mentioned Borrower's, Co-Borrower's, Guarantor's and Mortgagors have availed loans from **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited,** by mortgaging your immovable properties. Consequent to default committed by you all, your loan account has been classified as **Non-performing Asset,** whereas **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** being a secured creditor under the Act, and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with rule 2 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued **Demand notice** calling upon the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors as mentioned in column No.2 to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with future interest thereon within **60 days** from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served on some of them for various reasons.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	Loan Account No. & Loan Amount	Details of the Security to be enforced	Date of NPA & Demand Notice date	Amount Due in Rs. / as on
1	1) Mr. Nagaraju C K 2) Mrs. Shailaja	Loan Account No. 32909630000405 Loan Amount Rs.5,00,000/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and parcel of the property bearing No.07, Sl No.07,situated at Chikkahulluru Village Kasaba Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District now comes under the limits of Chokkahalli Gram Panchayath and **bounded on the: East by:** Muniyappa, **West by:** Survey number's property & Road, **North by:** Kenchappa, **South by:** Rathnamma. Measuring 60 ft X 23ft.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09-04-2026	**Rs.3,86,384.82 (Rupees Three Lakh Eighty Six Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Four and Eighty Two Paisa Only)** due as on 07-04-2026
2	1. Mrs. Padma P 2. Mr. Sanjay Kumar	Loan Account No. 46459630001071 46459410000288 Loan Amount Rs.5,00,000/- Rs. 5,00,000/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All the piece and parcel of the Property bearing No.08, Sl.No.128, situated at Tharabahalli Village, Hoskote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, Presently Comes under the limits of Khajihosahalli Gram Panchayath and **Boundedby the: East by:** Channel, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Vacant Site, **South by:** Property of 104. Measuring East to West: 29 feet and North to South: 31 feet.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09-04-2026	**Rs.8,54,585.20 (Rupees Eight Lakh Fifty Four Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Five and Twenty Paisa Only)** due as on 09-04-2026
3	1) Mr. Basavaraju, 2) Mrs. Nagamma	Loan Account No. 45389630000197 Loan Amount Rs.5,00,000/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and Property No.43/43, Assessment No.39, measuring 53X34, Situated at Kudasiddanapalya Village, Ajjanahalli Gram Panchayath, Tavarekere Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore Urban District and **bounded on the:- East by:** Property belongs to Motamma, **West by:** Property belongs to Siddaraju, **North by:** Road, **South by:** Property belongs to Puttamadappa.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09-04-2026	**Rs.3,55,535.45 (Rupees Three Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Five and Forty Five Paisa Only)** due as on 07-04-2026
4	1) Mrs. Savithramma, 2) Mr. Gavisiddegowda/ Mr. Chikkaidegowda	Loan Account No. 47040430000090 47049630001381 Loan Amount Rs.5,00,000/- Rs.5,00,000/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and parcel of the property bearing No.152900203100200342 Khaneshwari No.345/326, Measuring East to West 11.277600000000001 Meters and North to South 19.2024 Meters situated at Yadamaranahalli Village, Acchalu Grama Panchayath, Uyyamballi Hobali, Kanakapura Block, Ramanagara District and **bounded on: East by:** Property belongs to Ravi Y.K, **West by:** House belongs to Girigowda, **North by:** Remaining Property, **South by:** Rajabidi.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09-04-2026	**Rs.9,04,405.47 (Rupees Nine Lakh Four Thousand Four Hundred Five And Forty Seven Paisa Only)** due as on 07-04-2026
5	Mr. Nagaraj M Mrs. Jyothi M	Loan Account No. 46459630001006 46459410001762 Loan Amount Rs.3,00,000/- Rs.1,68,000/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All the piece and parcel of the property bearing Katha No.162/10, Assessment No.10, situated at Shivanapura Village, Nandagudi Hobli, Hosakote Taluk and **Bounded by the:- East by:** Sri. Venkataramanappa House, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site Property, **South by:** Sri. Muniraju House. Measuring 27X19 Feet. Measuring East to West: 6.705 Mtrs and North to South: 8.229 Mtrs, in all measuring 55.18 Sq.Mtrs	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09.04.2026	**Rs.2,95,829.78 (Rupees Two Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Nine And Seventy Eight Paisa Only)** due as on 07-04-2026 and interest there on
6	Mr. P.Riyaz/ Riyaz S.P., Also at: M/s. HMS Provision Store, Mrs. Noor Asfiya Mr. P.Babajan	Loan Account No. 34019430000395 Loan Amount Rs.24,93,077/-	**Mortgaged Immovable Property:** All that piece and parcel of property bearing Sy.No.53, Katha No.5, PID No.37-509-276, measuring East to west: 11.88 meter, and North to south: 9.7 meter total measuring 115.2 sq. meter, Situated at Rahamath Nagar, Vijaypura Town, 5th Division, Devanahalli Taluk Bengaluru Rural District ward No.23, and **Bounded on the: East by:** Multiple Road, **West by:** Property of C.B.Munishamappa, **North by:** Vacant Land belongs to Babajan, **South by:** E Schedule property belongs to P.Babajan.	Date of NPA: 03-04-2026 Demand Notice Date: 09.04.2026	**Amount outstanding: Rs.25,94,524.58 (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh Ninety-Four Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Four and Fifty Eight Paisa Only)** as on 07-04-2026 and interest there on

Notice is therefore given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor & Mortgagor as mentioned in Column No.2, calling upon them to make payment of the aggregate amount as shown in column No.6, against all the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower within **60 days** of Publication of this notice as the said amount is found payable in relation to the respective loan account as on the date shown in Column No. 6. It is made clear that if the aggregate amount together with future interest and other amounts which may become payable till the date of payment, is not paid, **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** shall be constrained to take appropriate action for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described in Column No.4. Please note that this publication is made without prejudice to such rights and remedies as are available to **Jana Small Finance Bank Limited** against the Borrower's/ Co-Borrower's/ Guarantor's/ Mortgagors of the said financials under the law, you are further requested to note that as per section 13(13) of the said act, you are restrained/ prohibited from disposing of or dealing with the above security or transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise of the secured asset without prior consent of Secured Creditor.

Date: 11-04-2026, Place: Bangalore & Bangalore Rural **Sd/- Authorised Officer, For Jana Small Finance Bank Limited**

EDITORIAL



War is too serious a matter to entrust to military men — Georges Clemenceau

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

FAILED U.S.-IRAN TALKS RAISE STAKES: INERTIA RISKS DEEPER CRISIS

THE collapse of US-Iran talks in Islamabad signals a shift from diplomatic deadlock to sharper strategic uncertainty with global consequences. US President Donald Trump said the US Navy would block the Strait of Hormuz, risking a spike in oil and gas prices, even as he warned he could "take out" Iran "in one day" while predicting Tehran would return to talks. After 21 hours of negotiations, Vice President J D Vance confirmed there was no agreement, citing Tehran's refusal to accept Washington's core conditions, particularly on nuclear commitments. Iranian officials pointed to "two or three key issues" that remained unresolved. The gap, however, is no longer merely technical; it is political, structural and increasingly ideological.

That this breakdown follows the highest level of US–Iran engagement since 1979 highlights the urgency and fragility of the moment. The risk is no longer just a missing deal, but confrontation settling into a new normal. This brings no comfort to a world already strained by fractured energy markets and widening geopolitical fault lines. At the centre of this volatility is the Strait of Hormuz, the vital artery for global oil and gas flows. The world has already seen what a widening conflict in West Asia can do: surging crude prices, disrupted sea routes and cascading ripple effects across inflation, trade and global growth.

For India, the stakes are particularly high. Nearly 10 million Indians live and work across West Asia, providing critical remittances that sustain families and bolster foreign exchange reserves. India's deep exposure to Gulf energy markets—crude oil, liquefied natural gas and petrochemical inputs—means even minor disruptions can ripple through inflation, industrial output and fiscal stability. The downstream impact extends to pharmaceuticals, manufacturing supply chains and fertiliser production—all heavily dependent on imported inputs.

A prolonged standoff also complicates India's delicate strategic balancing act in West Asia. New Delhi has carefully cultivated ties across the region's competing poles, but renewed instability would narrow diplomatic space and increase security risks for its diaspora. The most worrying element is not that the talks failed, but that expectations were so limited going in yet remain unmet. As Iranian officials hint at continued diplomacy and US negotiators signal hardened positions, the path forward looks less like resolution and more like managed confrontation. History shows that in such standoffs, inertia can be as dangerous as intent. Without a credible off-ramp, the risk is not a frozen conflict but a slow burn into a deeper crisis that the strained global economy can ill afford—making a negotiated exit the only rational course.

ASHA, THE RESTLESS HEART WITHIN SONG

THE voice of Asha Bhosle has fallen silent. With her passing, the roll call of Hindi playback's giants moves further into history. Her voice carried a life that did not move in straight lines—marked by early struggle, choices that invited judgement and years of work without the certainty of stature. That restlessness never left her. She did not approach a song as something to be preserved; she entered it as if it were unfolding in the present.

This is why her lighter songs never felt trivial. There was always a person inside the performance, not just a voice mouthing lyrics. In '*Aaiye Meherbaan*', the invitation is not merely stylised; it is alert, aware of its own effect. In '*Piya Tu Ab To Aaja*', the famous call is playful, yet edged with impatience, almost a demand to be seen and answered. The playful "Monica, oh my darling" became a cultural echo. She could turn inward too: '*Dil Cheez Kya Hai*' carries restraint, while '*Mera Kuch Samaan*' feels like a letter read aloud. Across languages, she adapted instinctively—her Telugu '*Idi Mounageetham*' buoyant, her Tamil '*Nee Paartha Paarvai*' marked by melancholy, each performance shaped by context. In contrast, Lata Mangeshkar often seemed to remove herself from the centre, allowing the song to exist in a kind of untouched clarity. Asha did the opposite. She left her imprint everywhere. You could hear her voice carry a smile, a raised eyebrow, a hint of mischief and an instinct that refused to stay confined by expectation.

Her collaborations reflect this temperament. With O P Nayyar, she embraced a boldness that was almost rebellious for its era—songs that moved with a swing, attentive to the body as much as to emotion. With *R D Burman*, that instinct matured into exploration. In '*Dum Maro Dum'*, her phrasing carries a slight drag, a languor that matches the rhythm rather than sitting atop it; her voice, lighter and slightly husky, suggests detachment, even defiance, aligning with the song's countercultural mood, and marking a shift in playback expression. Even in later years, when she worked with A R Rahman, there was no sense of a veteran making a polite appearance. Age did not settle her; it sharpened her sense of play. Many great singers become monuments in their lifetime. Asha resisted that stillness.

QUICK TAKE

AUNTIE MISFIRE

A 61-year-old Indian-origin nurse in the UK was awarded ₹1.8 lakh after a tribunal found that a colleague kept calling her "auntie" even though she asked him to stop. The case is about more than just words; it's about listening to others. In parts of Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, calling someone "auntie" or "uncle" shows respect and warmth. But in a British office, it can feel over-familiar or even suggest age bias. When people move between cultures, these faultlines get highlighted. People have the right to choose how they are addressed. Cultural customs should not outweigh personal preferences. Real respect means paying attention to what someone asks, not just what you intend.

India should avoid overreacting to Pakistan's mediation claims, maintain restraint and strategic autonomy and focus on long-term regional positioning and emerging economic opportunities

DISPOSABLE vs ENDURING PARTNERSHIPS

MAKARAND R PARANJAPE
Author and commentator

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

SOURAV ROY

THERE is much heartburn in India over arch-adversary Pakistan's role in mediating the United States and Iran contretemps during the current two-week ceasefire. Now, with the talks having failed, many Indian commentators are gloating, "We told you so."

Without quite being churlish, we must reiterate the difference between messengers versus mediators and, as matters stand, hosts versus participants. But credit must be given where it is due. Pakistan's stature has, indeed, gone up after hosting the US-Iran talks. And now we hear its troops have also reached Saudi Arabia.

Pakistan, which is staring at a default on international loans desperately needs a cash injection. Which might better explain its recent actions more than all its crowing over its success in international forums, it is actually looking for its next quick fix to save it from the abyss.

In the meanwhile, petrol and cooking gas shortages, not to speak of power cuts and looking ahead to the hot summer, India's squeeze on its waters does not augur well for the mercenary and middleman—we won't use the "d" word that our external affairs minister, quite undiplomatically, if aptly resorted to.

Indians, on the other hand, especially our intelligentsia, have been pressing for some statement, if not intervention, in the ongoing imbroglio. Especially voiced from certain influential quarters, including a phalanx of our former senior diplomats, is a demand to support Iran and condemn the US-Israeli aggression in the Gulf. Some have even sighed, somewhat wistfully, for an '*aman ki asha*' redux, a resumption of people-to-people dialogue even when the other side has threatened to nuke India no matter who attacks Pakistan.

Strange times? Nothing compared to US President Donald Trump's threat of forever destroying Iranian civilisation. That single post, laced with expletives, has earned its place in history books as the most un-president-like social media post ever. Trump himself will be remembered for much else, even if his face does not end up adorning Mt Rushmore, which might be his most cherished wish. Even more than the Nobel Peace Prize, which he got second-hand from its last Venezuelan recipient. Indeed, that post has invited some to call him mentally unsound, invoking the 25th Amendment of the US Constitution to force him to step down.

Not going to happen, though. Why? Because everyone knows that we must not make the mistake of taking the US President literally, even if we take him seriously. Not overreacting to him for playing 'crazy' to squeeze out a better deal should, by now, be common sense. Although it still seems pretty uncommon in the Left Liberal media all over the world. Both US allies and global media have watched from the sidelines, seemingly reacting much more to Trump's posts than to what is actually happening in our world.

But those in the know see these moves as yet another spell of Trump's unpredictable manoeuvres. As is the current ceasefire itself, which seems already to be tottering. The US and Israel joint operation may well be preparing for its final assault even as this column goes to press. The world has indeed become much more predictable than ever before in living memory. This makes established expertise, more often than not, not just inadequate but plain wrong.

India and Pakistan, as is obvious, cannot be compared, let alone hyphenated. As the US-Israel war on Iran enters a crucial phase, Indians should get over such consternation, not to speak of indigestion. That is why Indians need not worry too much about the leverage that Pakistan, because of its physical and religious proximity to Iran and its strategic position as the only official US ally in the subcontinent, enjoys.

In fact, as the war enters its very dangerous endgame, with strangely abusive, perhaps diversionary outbursts by Trump on his own Truth Social platform, India's stoic silence will stand us in good stead. All the more reason why India's current season of 'Pakistan envy' is misplaced.

Even as US Vice President J D Vance, along with Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner Special Envoy for Peace and Steve Witkoff, US Special Envoy to the Middle East have returned to Washington apparently empty-handed, India's options are far from cramped or limited. The world order is changing, and it is time we try to position ourselves to take advantage of it.

The Indian Ocean, the only ocean named after a nation, should be our sphere of influence. Sooner or later, we have to offer, if not to police it, at least to safeguard its waters from forces hostile not only to us but to the emerging realignment of powers. India is already a major stakeholder and beneficiary of the proposed India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).

With the Strait of Hormuz threatened, IMEC may well reemerge as a viable alternative. It would be a dream come true to connect India to Europe, with which we have a free trade agreement, via West Asia, which hosts strategic allies such as Israel and the UAE. Announced at the 2023 G20 summit, IMEC would cut transit times by 40 percent, boosting trade, creating jobs and fostering economic integration through rail links, shipping routes and energy interdependency.

India's time has come. By maintaining its dignity and retaining the trust of all parties, India is well-positioned to move to the high table. There is no need to make moralistic noises or take up pious postures. We may well remember that non-alignment, which we may call multilateralism or strategic autonomy, can well be as realistic, not to speak of transactional, when needed.

Until then, we can always call for a cessation of hostilities and peace in the region. India has—and must continue to—stand for peace. But not at the expense of our legitimate interests. In our own subcontinent, we have ensured energy security for our nearest neighbours. Now we should not adopt a holier-than-thou façade that makes us seem preachy or sanctimonious.

India has already taken sides without spelling it out. No rush to do so, but our stance should be clear when the time comes. Or even a bit before the real winner of the war swoops down to claim all the spoils or, should we say, spills.

(Views are personal)
(Tweets @MakrandParanspe)

THE DAY THAT GIVES

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

AN upcoming Hindu and Jain festival that springs to mind is Akshaya Tritiya on April 19, called Akha Teej in the North. It's traditionally believed to symbolise 'never-diminishing' (*akshaya*) prosperity, and is considered a highly auspicious day for new beginnings, investments and purchasing gold. So much so that it's also jokingly called Indian Gold Rush Day. Rituals include prayers to Lord Vishnu, Goddess Lakshmi and Kubera, as well as acts of charity such as *annadaanam* or feeding people.

For Jains, it commemorates Lord Rishabhanatha ending his long fast. Rishabhanatha, also known as Adinath (First Lord), is revered by Jains as the pioneer of civilisation. He is credited in Jainism with having invented and taught fire, cooking and all the skills needed for human beings to live, including seventy-two accomplishments taught to men and sixty-four crafts taught to women, including farming and writing. The legend goes that he was born in Ayodhya to King Nabhi and Queen Marudevi, and was the first Tirthankara of the current era.

One day, Nilanjana, a dancer who was performing for Rishabhanatha and his court, suddenly collapsed and died. Nilanjana's sudden death is said to have reminded Rishabhanatha of life's transitory nature, jolting him to renounce his kingdom, family and material wealth. He practised austerities for many years, travelled across the land and attained *kevala jnana* (omniscience) at the holy town of Prayagraj, called Purimtal in Jain texts. He is believed to have attained *moksha* on Mount Kailash. He established the foundational principles of the Jain faith in the remote past, according to Jain belief.

During his austerities, Rishabhanatha travelled without food for 400 days. The day on which he took his first *ahara* or food is celebrated by Jains as Akshaya Tritiya. In devotion to Rishabhanatha, Shvetambara Jains perform a 400-day fast, during which they eat frugally only on alternating days. This religious practice is known as Varshitap. The fast is broken on Akshaya Tritiya.

Sanatan associates Akshaya Tritiya with the birth of Lord Parashurama and the start of Treta Yuga. Also, Ganga, the great mother river, is believed to have descended to Earth on this day. Further, it is not only the day that Sri Krishna gifted the Akshaya Patra, or inexhaustible vessel of food, to the Pandavas when they were in exile in the forest but also the day that Sudama met Krishna in Dwaraka and was blessed by the Lord with great prosperity, redeeming him and his family from dire poverty. In fact, Krishna was so generous to his old schoolmate that he was about to eat a third handful of the poha that Sudama had brought for him. But Mahalakshmi, in the form of Rukmini, held Krishna's wrist and stopped him from eating it, because just two handfuls had already bestowed unimaginable wealth on Sudama. So, Akshaya Tritiya has a formidable theological backup in the Indian belief system, with each incident being a life-affirming and faith-bolstering tale.

AFP

Akshaya Tritiya has a formidable theological backup in the Indian belief system, with each incident being a life-affirming tale across Jain and Sanatan ways of life. With lessons on charity as the greatest act of merit to attain prosperity, the day also has its dark sides associated with social evils

The deeper message in Sudama's tale is that feeding others is like feeding god—we invite blessings and good luck upon ourselves. Hence, the importance of *annadaanam* on Akshaya Tritiya day. Not everyone can afford to feed strangers every day, so these special days are built into our calendar when we, too, can feel we are part of god's plan by contributing our mite as members of an interdependent race. As you know, *annadaanam* is considered the greatest act of merit, which any one of us can perform according to our means, be it buying a bunch of bananas for the cobbler or street children or treating office workers like the liftman, guards, peons and clerks to fruit or sweets, maybe both. As always, our Indian beliefs are based on our ancestors' observation of nature and its many moods and cycles. Akshaya Tritiya is thus revered as a day when the sun and moon are at their peak brightness, making it a powerful day for spiritual growth and prosperity in popular belief.

The dark side of Akshaya Tritiya was that mass marriages of children were performed on this day. From what I could gather, child marriages on Akha Teej have still not completely stopped across India, but have greatly declined after facing strong legal crackdowns.

While the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 made such marriages illegal nationwide, the practice continues in some rural pockets due to deep-rooted social customs. This law replaced the older Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929. It introduced stricter penalties, including up to two years of imprisonment and fines of up to ₹1 lakh for those organising or promoting child marriages.

A landmark ruling by the Rajasthan High Court in 2024 held village heads personally responsible for preventing child marriages in their jurisdictions. This reportedly created a 'domino effect', leading to the prevention of over 10,000 child marriages during Akha Teej that year which, disturbingly, was but two years ago. The good news is that some villages in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have apparently achieved 'child marriage-free' status on Akha Teej through intensive community awareness programmes and local volunteer work. Indian society is on the alert and not afraid to clean out its cobwebs. It has the courage to do so because it owns its religion, while holding fast to all the meaning and beauty that it is so rich in. Meanwhile, happy Baisakhi, Pohela Boisakh, Vishu and Puthandu, dear readers. May we all be blessed, of whichever faith or no faith.

(Views are personal)
(shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Transitioning times

Ref: *Dollarisation is dying* (Apr 12). Geopolitics alone cannot redefine the financial ecosystem where stability counts more than race for supremacy. Countries with huge trade volumes like India, China and Russia can expedite transition to alternative currencies. But the US's dominance in the oil segment acts as a major deterrent.
Rajarao Kumar, Bengaluru

Poll picture

Ref: *Verdict 2026 will define Modi's BJP* (Apr 12). Interestingly, this election also shows a clear-cut reorientation towards regional aspirations, developmental models and circumspection in tone instead of divisive outburst. Nobody can predict results; however, an organised party rapidly learns from the failures for the larger picture can't so easily be wished away.
Jitendranath Guru, Padampur

Halting hostilities

Ref: *US-Iran talks* (Apr 12). One should not count the chickens before they hatch. At a time when Israel is hell-bent upon bombing Lebanon, the ceasefire lies on thin ice. One only hopes that all stakeholders clinch a deal and the hostilities come to a halt.
Aanya Singhal, Noida

Biogas alternative

Ref: *Coal gasification* (Apr 12). Powers must be reminded of when, 60 years ago, the kitchens in Bombay operated on "coal gas" generated by the Bombay Gas Company and laboratories across Uttar Pradesh's universities were running captive miniature coal gas plants. A cooperative movement sourcing raw material for biogas can free us from import dependency to a great extent.
Rajan Ugra, email

CSK's momentum

Ref: *Sanju special helps CSK* (Apr 12). After a conceivably long time, CSK found the 'yellow brick road' on Saturday. One hopes that the squad keeps up with the winning momentum and romps home in the rest of the matches in the tournament. It's not said in vain that 'impossible is often untried'.
S Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai

Punjab identity

Ref: *Ballads and bullets* (*The New Sunday Express Magazine*, Apr 12). Punjab, known for its athletic spirit and strong legacy in the Armed Forces must not give in to the glamorisation of weapons and on-screen depiction of violence as ideals for youth. The state's true identity lies in courage.
Ramesh Y, Hyderabad

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Rajnath Singh @rajnathsingh
Today, I had the opportunity to learn and understand the glorious history of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly and its rich democratic traditions in a new form.

Jairam Ramesh @Jairam_Ramesh
It is clear that the Modi government wants to put the caste census on the back burner... The agenda is to avoid conducting a caste census altogether.

Tejashwi Yadav @yadavtejashwi
In over 76,000 primary & middle schools, there is not a single music teacher, yet the corrupt JD(U)-BJP govt has spent ₹158.44 cr on buying musical instruments.

Birth
Born in Sep 8, 1933, in Sangli, she recorded her first song at the age of 10 years

Rise
She rose to prominence as a leading playback singer in Hindi cinema

Pride
She bagged a National Film Award for her playback performance in Umrao Jaan

Record
Sang more than 12,000 songs across a career spanning eight decades

THE VOICE FALLS SILENT, LEGACY LIVES ON...

REBEL HEART

A voice that generations could relate to, **Asha Bhosle** sang for all moods for eight decades in multiple languages and has left behind a genre-bending ouvre

B H HARSH

WHEN it comes to talking about artistic impact, facts often don't suffice. But this time, they might. Let's start with the basics—Asha Bhosle recorded her first song in 1943, and her last recorded song, 'The Shadowy Light', came out two months ago. More than 12,000 songs across multiple languages, a career spanning 83 years — and how do we sum up this legacy in a few hundred words? These are the days when you realise the insurmountable impact some artists have made in our lives. Asha Bhosle, without any exaggeration, is one of those rare artists.

As '90s kids, we grew up hearing about Lata Mangeshkar's legacy, how she could never hit a false note. Our connection with Asha was more personal than with Kishore Kumar and Muhammed Rafi. When we heard her in 'Rangeela Re' (Rangeela, 1995) or 'Le Gayi' (Dil To Pagal Hai, 1997), we heard a joy for life. This journey of endurance and relevance began nearly 50 years ago. She recorded her first Hindi film song in 1948, for the film Afsana. However, by the early 50s, Lata Mangeshkar had emerged as the undisputed queen of film music and the voice of the heroine. The composer didn't like taking too many risks. What did that leave Asha with? The club songs. In other words, the songs of temptation and desire.

Hindi cinema, for the longest time, was obsessed with providing a moral compass to its audience, which reflected in its countless hero-villain stories. This approach also trickled down into music at the time, as club and cabaret songs came to the fore. And while Helen became the poster girl for 'the seductress,'

Asha Bhosle became its voice: 'Aaiye Meherbaan,' 'O Haseena Julfon Waali,' 'Mud Mud Ke Na Dekh' - the list is endless. As proved with a resounding impact years later, with a ghazal-driven album like Umrao Jaan (1981) and the melancholic Ijaazat (1987), Asha could be the heart of these albums if given a chance.

It took the versatile vocalist almost three decades and many encouraging collaborators to carve out a unique identity of her own and emerge from her elder sister's shadow. SD Burman and Madan Mohan gave her some iconic, playful numbers that went beyond the virginal heroine-seductress binary. Later, OP Nayyar tapped into Asha's versatility, delivering some of her biggest hits like 'Ude Jab Jab,' 'Isharon Isharon Mein,' and 'Aaiye Meherbaan.' However, the union of Asha Bhosle and RD Burman brought about a tectonic shift in Hindi film music. As film music became more funky and youth-centric, Asha's energy and love for experimentation came out in their full glory under Pancham's equally pathbreaking soundscape. With RD Burman, Asha's free-spiritedness peaked as she imbued countless of his compositions with her vigorous inflections, giving a whole new dynamic to film music. Years later, she had a similar rejuvenating partnership with AR Rahman, who gave her songs ranging from 'O Bhanwre' to 'Radha Kaise Na Jale'.

Asha was also increasingly becoming the voice of a youthful, more self-confident heroine who sang about what she wanted. Be it Madhubala, Zeenat Aman, Parveen Baba or Rekha — their on-screen image was often incomplete without Asha's spunk. Hers was still the voice of desire, except it was no longer the 'immoral' thing to be — at least, not as much. As the face and shape of mainstream film music kept changing, Asha managed to reinvent herself every time. She also had a substantial presence in the '90s Indipop scene.

With a poetic touch, after beginning as the voice of the 'bad girl' who didn't belong to everyone, Asha Bhosle now enjoys a legacy in which she belongs to every generation of music lovers. She belongs to all of us and continues to live among us.

STATE HONOURS

LAST RITES TO BE HELD IN MUMBAI

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

NOTED Bollywood playback singer for decades, Asha Bhosle, passed away on Sunday at the age of 92. She suffered a cardiac arrest and respiratory problem on Saturday, following that, she was admitted to Breach Candy Hospital.

Her mortal remains were brought to her residence in Lower Parel from the hospital later in the day.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis paid last respects to Bhosle at her residence and offered floral tributes. Fadnavis called her a unique and popular playback singer. He said this is the second major loss of the Mangeshkar family after Lala Mangeshkar's demise.

State Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar, along with MLAs Sunil Shinde and Prasad Lad, also paid their respects.

Asha was known for her distinct voice and unique singing style and won several awards and honours, including the prestigious Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian honour and the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. Anand, the singer's son, had told the media earlier in the day that people can pay their last respects to her at 11 am tomorrow at Casa Grande, Lower Parel, her residence.

The last rites of the legendary singer will be performed at Shivaji Park in Mumbai on Monday afternoon with full state honours.

TRIBUTES POUR IN...

Saddened by the passing of Asha Bhosle Ji, one of the most iconic voices India has known. Her musical journey enriched our cultural heritage
Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

The demise of the great singer Asha Bhosle ji is extremely heartbreaking. Through her voice, her art will forever remain immortal among us
Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader

Asha Tai not only carved out a unique identity with her sweet voice and unparalleled talent, but also enriched Indian music further
Amit Shah, Home Minister

Words feel too small for the loss. One moment the heart falls silent, and the next, it drifts through the countless melodies she gifted all of us
Sachin Tendulkar, ex-cricketer

INSIDER TRACK

Harder look at big consultants

From SFIO assignments to women's safety frameworks, Big Four firms are now deeply involved in government work. They draft policy papers, design tenders, manage bids, and sometimes oversee implementation. In several cases, they act like end-to-end operators while the official machinery only signs approvals and clears payments worth thousands of crores. Insiders say this outsourcing wave has blurred accountability lines. Core state functions are becoming consultant-driven. This raises questions about institutional capacity. The Cabinet Secretariat is reportedly now reviewing this dependence. The concern is not only financial but also structural, as accountability and administrative responsibility remain under question here.

Bihar to take lead on women's quota?

Amid the BJP's efforts to build consensus around parliamentary amendments to the Women's Reservation Act, 2023, there appears to be some curious political signalling underway. One line of speculation suggests that the party could set an early example in a state such as Bihar, where women's reservation at the panchayat level has been in place for years under the NDA framework. In this context, there is some chatter that projecting a woman leader as a potential chief ministerial face could serve as a symbolic demonstration of intent ahead of the special three-day Parliament session scheduled from April 16. However, within party circles, this is still being discussed more as a possibility than a settled plan.

Briefcases have their budgets, too

CPWD has decided how much officers can spend on official briefcases, bags, and even ladies' purses from public coffers. It sounds routine, but it has sparked a ripple of amusement. According to an official note, the Director General (D-G) can go up to ₹10,000 plus GST for an attaché case or bag. The lower ranks have more modest limits, ranging from ₹5,000 to ₹3,500. The ADG and DDG level officers are entitled to ₹8,000 and ₹6,500, respectively. The brands and retailers are left to the officers' choices. But the bills must bear the shop or company's valid name and address, and the shop or company must have a valid GST for reimbursement claims. The indulgence is permitted just once every three years, the note states.

Diplomacy rush expected in May

March and April felt like a nonstop sprint on the diplomacy front in the country due to the West Asia war. Can't expect a quieter May either. There's talk of PM Modi possibly heading to Kenya for a France-Africa summit, with 'friend' Emmanuel Macron extending the invite. At home, India is preparing to host BRICS meetings, with Marco Rubio confirming a visit in May. The Quad foreign ministers' meeting is another gathering. Though not yet announced, a likely visit to Norway and a broader European tour by Modi are again on the cards. Then, the India-Africa summit by late May and a possible Big Cat Alliance meet, too. Diplomacy has no downtime.

What's Raghav Chadha up to?

AAP's Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha is seen going through a political transition after being removed as Deputy Leader in the Upper House. Interestingly, his political acumen and focus on public issues are increasingly discussed in BJP circles more than within his own party. Senior BJP leaders have praised his oratory and people-centric concerns, suggesting these align better with their approach. A BJP leader said he raises genuine public issues which "would find a more natural home in a party like ours". Chadha has not indicated joining the BJP but is reportedly weighing options. Speculation suggests he may consider forming a new political outfit. His cryptic posts, including "silenced, not defeated," and reduced criticism of BJP, have fueled debate.

Dialogue on women's bill tough: Cong

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged chiefs of all parties to support amendments to the Women's Reservation Act, 2023 during the three-day special session of Parliament, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to the PM on Sunday, stating that it would be "impossible" to have a meaningful discussion on the law without clarity on delimitation and related aspects.

He demanded that an all-party meeting be convened on the issue after the state polls conclude on April 29. Kharge's letter prompted a response from Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, triggering what has been called a "letter war" between the two.

In his letter to the PM, Kharge argued that convening a special sitting of House from April 16 amid state polls reinforces the perception that the government is rushing the implementation of the women's reservation law for "political mileage".

He reiterated his demand for an all-party meeting to deliberate on the delimitation issue, which is being linked to amendments to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023, after April 29. "As you are aware, the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 was passed by Parliament unanimously in September 2023. At that time, on behalf of the Congress, I had demanded that this important law should become effective immediately," Kharge wrote to the PM.

"It has been 30 months since then, and now this special sitting has been called without taking us into confidence and your government is seeking our cooperation again without revealing any details on the delimitation going to be done," Kharge wrote.

Within hours of Kharge's letter, Rijiju responded on behalf of the PM. "Promises to India's women cannot become politics of postponement. Today, when it is time to deliver the#NarishaktiVandan Adhiniyam, hesitation & questions are being raised. I respectfully differ," Rijiju wrote. He emphasised that the passage of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in 2023 by both Houses of Parliament reflected a long-standing national aspiration and a genuine collective effort across the political spectrum.

"Today we are in 2026 and if we don't act now, it is possible that women's reservation may not be implemented in time for the 2029 elections. Should be we allow a possible delay in implementation to make our best efforts to meet the expectations of the people to implement it as soon as possible? This is why in our humble view, this is the most appropriate and logical moment to move forward with the necessary amendments," he clarified.

Govt engaging with stakeholders, says Rijiju

Rijiju disagreed with Kharge's concerns over lack of consultation, stating that the government had been engaging with stakeholders since March 16, 2026. He mentioned having personally discussed the matter with Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, the party's chief whip in the Rajya Sabha, during the Budget session.

India rejects 'fictitious names' for Arunachal places assigned by China

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Sunday rejected China's latest attempt to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, urging Beijing to refrain from actions that "inject negativity into relations and undermine efforts to build better understanding."

"India categorically rejects any mischievous attempts by the Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. He said such measures cannot change the ground reality. "These areas, including Arunachal Pradesh, were, are, and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," Jaiswal said.

"Such attempts by China at introducing false claims and manufacturing baseless narratives cannot alter the undeniable reality that these places and territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, were, are, and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," he said. The statement also warned that such steps run counter to ongoing efforts by both sides to stabilise bilateral relations. It urged Beijing to avoid actions that "inject negativity" into ties and undermine attempts to build mutual understanding.

"These actions by the Chinese side detract from ongoing efforts to stabilize and normalize India-China bilateral ties. China should refrain from actions which inject negativity into relations and undermine efforts to create better understanding," the Spokesperson said.

India has repeatedly pushed back against similar moves by China. In May 2025, New Delhi had rejected Beijing's attempt to rename 27 places in Arunachal Pradesh, calling the exercise "preposterous."

China has carried out such renaming exercises multiple times in recent years, including in 2017, 2021, 2023 and 2024, often during periods of heightened border tensions. The first such move in 2017 followed the visit of the Dalai Lama to the state.

Inter-services symmetry in focus of Navy meet

The Indian Navy will convene its Commanders' Conference 2026 in Delhi from April 14 to 16, with focus on conflict lessons and inter-services jointness. The first edition of the biannual Commanders' Conference will bring together the Navy's top leadership for a review of operational posture and capability development.

ACCIDENT

As many as 12 passengers were injured after a HRTC bus rammed into the hillside while navigating a mountain road in Una district of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday, officials said.

3 KILLED | 2 HURT AS CAR PLUNGES INTO DITCH IN UP

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	41	26	Mumbai	33	27
Bhopal	38	24	Panaji	34	26
Jaipur	39	25	Patna	36	25
Amritsar	36	20	Lucknow	37	24
Chennai	34	27	Port Blair	32	27
Kolkata	35	26	Imphal	28	20
Srinagar	20	07	Chandigarh	36	22

Many electors in Murshidabad uncertain if they will be able to vote on Apr 23 • CM says Centre may bring bill to merge some areas with Bihar

SIR deletions in Bengal seat haunt landless, lower middle-class groups

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

DELETION of names, who mostly belong to landless poor and lower middle class groups, from the post-SIR electoral rolls in West Bengal has created an atmosphere of anxiety and tension in many villages under Beldanga assembly constituency in Murshidabad district, around 250 kms from Kolkata.

Mostafa Sheikh (40), a migrant worker, Abdul Tahid Sheikh (66), a landless farmer, Sutapa Mondal (25), a homemaker, unemployed Bibhas Ghosh (25) and thousands like them from Jodupur, Kodla, Rangamati Chandpara, Majhira, Dabkai, Gobindapur, Kalitalapara, Nandipara and Dighirpara villages have been rushing to the district administrative office in Behramore desperately seeking to know whether they can vote in the elections to be held on April 23.

The villagers sought clarifications from West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal on why their names were deleted. Agarwal visited Beldanga on Saturday to review poll preparedness.

Mostafa Sheikh, a waste hair collector, has come back to his Jodupur village from Gopalganj in Bihar when he came to know that his name has not figured in the electoral rolls published by the EC on March 6. Mostafa collects waste hair at Mirganj of Gopalganj and sells it to his client at ₹500 per kg to support his four-member family. Now he rushes to the SDO office in Behrampore, seeking to know when the appellate tribunal will open so that he can make an attempt to get his name included in list.

"I don't know why my name has been removed from the final list. We are residents of Jodupur for more than 80 years and have been voting in every election. I appeared for SIR hearing and submitted all required documents as per guidelines. Only my name has been removed," Mostafa said, "No political party visits us. We don't get any help," he added.

Tahid Sheikh, 66, of the same village could not find his name in the supplementary list though he had been voting in all elections for the past 40 years.

Jainal Abedin, a madrasa teacher at Jodupur, said, "We had submitted all documents to the EC but my father's name has been deleted from the supplementary list after adjudication by judicial officers. My father gathered land deeds of more than 50 years lying with us and rushed to Behrampore with anxiety." Jainal claimed that a big number of voters, mainly belonging to the minority community, have lost their voting rights. Murshidabad is the worst hit district.

Many aggrieved villagers have asked the CEO why genuine voters had been struck off the list. "Take steps so that the names deleted in the SIR could again be included in the list. This is my request," Taslima Biwi told CEO Agarwal, standing outside her home in Mahestala. Agarwal said, "With directives of the Supreme Court, judicial officers had handled the under-adjudication cases. Let me see what I can do."

Abdul Tahid Sheikh from Jodupur goes through his land records for appealing in tribunal | EXPRESS

EC to send team to assess poll preparedness

The Election Commission of India (ECI), particularly with regards to assembly polls in West Bengal, has decided to send a high-level central team led by Senior Deputy Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Bharati on Monday to take a final stock of the preparedness for the two-phase voting on April 23 and 29. Noting that the visiting team would be divided into two groups, a source in the poll panel said, "One group will be reviewing the preparedness in the South Bengal districts including East Burdwan, West Burdwan, East Midnapore, Howrah, Hooghly, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Kolkata and the second one will hold meetings to review for the North Bengal districts including Alipurduar, Cooch Behar, North Dinajpur, and South Dinajpur, among others. According to the sources, both the groups led by senior ECI officials from New Delhi will also deliberate and discuss issues with general and police observers appointed by the election commission, besides the collectors and police chiefs of each of the districts.

BJP wants to divide state into three parts through delimitation route: Didi

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

WEST Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleged on Sunday that the BJP-led central government is using the delimitation exercise to split the state into three parts.

The ruling Trinamool Congress chief was addressing poll rallies in Chhatna and Onda in Bankura district and Khandagosh in Purba Bardhaman. "The BJP is planning to bring in a delimitation bill in Parliament to divide West Bengal into three parts. It may merge parts of West Bengal with Bihar or Odisha, and torture Bengalis there," Mamata alleged.

Mamata also made a serious charge against the BJP claiming that a financial deal of ₹1,000 crore has been made to oust Trinamool Congress government from power in Bengal in the upcoming Assembly elections in the state.

Her remarks referred to a viral video linked to the Aam Janata Unnayan Party (AJUP) leader Humayun Kabir, where he was purportedly heard speaking about contacts with BJP leaders, including Suvendu Adhikari, LoP and BJP MLA from Nandigram constituency in East Midnapore district.

Banerjee also alleged that central forces deployed in the state for the upcoming polls were "disrespecting" women in the name of conducting searches. She accused the BJP of bribing voters before polls and called the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls the "country's biggest scam" in recent times.

At Khandaghosh in Purba Bardhaman district, the chief minister also claimed that the saffron party would "snatch everything" from the people if it came to power in the state.

"The BJP bribes voters before the elections. But they forget their promises made before elections soon after the polling is over. That was notices in the Bihar elections," Banerjee said. She further alleged that the BJP would try to manipulate the polling process.

Trinamool is an anti-tribal, anti-North Bengal party, says PM

Urging people to vote for a 'double engine' government, Modi said Bengal will witness development at double the speed. He also alleged, "TMC is an anti-tribal, anti-women, anti-youth and anti-North Bengal party, which has ruined all sectors, including infrastructure, industries and transport in the state".

TMC worked with 'tukde-tukde gang' to cut off access to Northeast: Modi

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday lambasted the Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal, alleging that the "tukde-tukde" gang, in connivance with the ruling party, has threatened to disconnect the strategic Siliguri Corridor in north Bengal to cut off the Northeast from the rest of the country.

While addressing a gathering at Kawakhali ground in Darjeeling's Siliguri district, the PM urged the crowd to vote for BJP-nominated candidates in the upcoming elections.

"The 'tukde-tukde' gang had threatened to snap the strategic Siliguri corridor to cut off the Northeast from the rest of the country, and the TMC supported them from the streets to Parliament because of its "appeasement politics", the Prime Minister alleged.

Modi said, "While the Trinamool Congress government could allot 6,000 crore for the madrasas, they are short of funds when it comes to the development of North Bengal. It is because of appeasement politics for a vote bank. It was celebrating festivals in Kolkata when North Bengal was flooded with heavy rains." Trinamool means anti-North Bengal, anti-tribal and anti-tea gardens," he added.

Sharpening his attacks on the Mamata government, Modi accused it of depriving people in North Bengal, a strong citadel of the BJP since 2019 when it had a phenomenal rise, winning the highest ever 18 Lok Sabha seats, of infrastructure development.

We noticed that prominent devotees often struggle with booking multiple, separate rituals. To ease this process, we are consolidating all major pujas into a single, seamless module

Hemant Dwivedi, BKTC president

No more daily pilgrim limit for Char Dham, ₹11 lakh puja launched

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

AS Uttarakhand prepares for the commencement of the Char Dham Yatra 2026, the state government has announced a significant relaxation in pilgrim management protocols.

In a move aimed at enhancing accessibility, authorities have decided to abolish the daily cap on the number of devotees allowed to visit the shrines.

The pilgrimage season officially kicks off on April 19 with the opening of the portals of Gangotri and Yamunotri on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. The gates of Kedarnath will open on April 22, followed by Badrinath on April 23 at 6:15 AM.

CM Pushkar Singh Dhami recently chaired a high-level review meeting, where the decision to remove visitor limits was finalised. This policy shift is expected to streamline the influx of devotees, who previously faced strict daily quotas during the peak season.

Simultaneously, the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) has introduced structural changes to temple rituals. While standard puja fees across committee-managed shrines will see a 5 to 10% hike, the committee is unveiling a premium "Mega Puja Module" now.

Priced at approximately ₹11 lakh, this comprehensive package is designed for high-profile donors and industrialists. "Temple committee expenses are largely met through donations and puja proceeds," BKTC president Hemant Dwivedi told this daily. "We noticed that prominent devotees often struggle with booking multiple, separate rituals. To ease this process, we are consolidating all major pujas into a single, seamless module," he said.

Dwivedi noted that the initiative draws inspiration from models successfully implemented at Tirupati Balaji and Vaishno Devi.

BJP sends Chouhan to pick Bihar CM

RAMASHANKAR & RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ Patna/New Delhi

THE BJP on Sunday appointed union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan as the central observer to oversee the selection of its legislative party leader in Bihar who will replace Nitish Kumar as the chief minister.

"The parliamentary board of the BJP has appointed Shivraj Singh Chouhan, union minister for agriculture and farmers welfare and rural development, as the central observer for the election of the leader of the BJP's legislative party in Bihar," BJP national general secretary Arun Singh said in a notification.

BJP legislative party meeting is likely to be held on April 14. Chouhan is reaching Patna on the same day. Later, NDA legislators will endorse the name of the BJP legislative party leader as the next CM, sources said. Kumar took oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha on April 10.

Earlier in the day, JD (U) national working president Sanjay Kumar Jha said the process of forming the new government in Bihar would begin after April 13.

Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary is considered as the frontrunner for the Chief Minister's post. Other top contenders to the post include union minister of state for home Nityanand Rai and deputy chief minister Vijay Kumar Sinha, ministers Dilip Jaiswal and Shreyasi Singh. Name of BJP MLA from Digha Sanjeev Chaurasia is also doing the rounds.

Nitish is likely to resign as CM on April 14 after chairing a cabinet meeting, which is likely to approve important proposals. A new NDA government headed by a BJP CM is likely to be sworn in on April 15, sources said. JD (U) leader and minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary said the new CM of the NDA would be elected upon the recommendation of BJP.

Deputy CM Sinha called on Governor Syed Ata Hussain at Lok Bhawan amid intensified activities for formation of a new government. Sources said Nitish held a meeting with the JD(U) MLAs and senior leaders. "Discussions were held about party's role in the new government and cabinet berths," a JD(U) leader said.

Meanwhile, JD (U) workers put up posters across Patna, pitching for Nitish's son, Nishant Kumar, as the next chief minister.

Paper solver outfit for excise constable exam busted in J'khand, 164 arrested

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

As many as 164 people, including five members of an interstate solver gang, have been arrested in connection with the Jharkhand Excise Constable Competitive Examination conducted by the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC). The development was disclosed at a press conference addressed by JSSC Chairman Prashant Kumar on Sunday.

As per the information received, preparations for this operation were underway secretly in an under-construction building located approximately one to two kilometres off the main Rangamati road.

Acting swiftly on intelligence regarding the presence of a large number of examinees at the location at midnight on Saturday, a team from the Ranchi Police arrived at the scene and conducted a raid and detained 164 persons, including 159 candidates (among them 7 women) and 5 members of the paper leak syndicate. Police recovered printers, prepared question papers and answer sheets, torn admit cards, suspicious mobile phones and bank cheques.

The youths were taken into custody on the grounds of suspicion. Reportedly, they have been kept at the Tamar Police Station. As the police raided the spot, two examinees managed to flee the spot; however, the police are interrogating the rest. Ranchi Rural SP, Praveen Pushkar, said every aspect of the case is being investigated.

The investigation revealed that various agents of the aforementioned gang had brought these candidates to the said location to provide them with exam questions and their answers, at a rate of ₹10–15 lakh per candidate. It also came to light that, in an effort to evade the police, the candidates had handed over their mobile phones, admit cards, and other belongings to the gang; some candidates had even issued bank cheques in the names of the gang members.

JSSC, however, has denied any possibility of paper leak, saying that the question paper found on the spot does not match with the original ones.

MODUS OPERANDI

1. 'Solver' gang supplied solved question papers
2. Agents helped candidates memorise at ₹10-15L rate
3. Candidates handed over admit card to evade police
4. Printers, prepared question papers, torn admit cards, bank cheques recovered

'Primitive tribes' land can be sold after official stamp'

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

CONCLUDING a long-standing dispute, the Jashpur collector's court has ruled in favour of the Pahari Korwa tribal community, ordering the restoration of ancestral lands "illegally purchased" by members of the converted community between 1955 and 1966.

The ruling overturns a previous decision by the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) and reinforces the stringent protections provided under the Land Revenue Code for indigenous tribes. The case originated when members of the Pahari Korwa community—a primitive tribe—filed an application before the SDO Jashpur under Section 170(B) of the Chhattisgarh Land Revenue Code. They challenged land transactions made decades ago, alleging they violated statutory rules. The SDO had initially dismissed the plea, citing that the transactions were "tribal-to-tribal" and occurred before 1959, thus placing them outside the scope of current scrutiny.

However, upon appeal, the court of Jashpur collector Rohit Vyas conducted an extensive review of the circumstances and the evolution of land laws. The court clarified that even "tribal-to-tribal" transactions fall within the ambit of Section 170(B) to prevent the exploitation of more vulnerable groups.

JAIPUR DIARY

RAJESH ASNANI

Our correspondent in Jaipur

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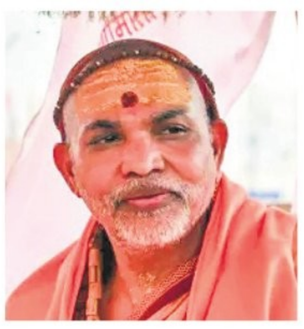
Medical officer quits after clash with BJP MLA

In Rajasthan, the resignation of a principal medical officer has sparked buzz after an alleged public clash with BJP MLA Radheshyam Bairwa. During a hospital inspection, Bairwa reportedly reprimanded PMO Dr Narendra Kumar Meghwal over poor sanitation and earlier chaos at OPD counters. Sources say repeated public scoldings left the PMO feeling humiliated. On April 9, he resigned, stating he took the job to serve people, not face insults. The incident has once again revived an uneasy pattern in the state, politicians versus the bureaucracy. Many are recalling the 2022 episode involving Girraj Singh Malinga, when a junior engineer was brutally assaulted.



'Gomata' row intensifies, seer sparks fresh buzz

Amid his ongoing face-off with Yogi Adityanath, Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati has stirred fresh buzz during his recent Kota visit—this time over Gomata. Claiming he has received death threats for defending cow protection in Uttar Pradesh, the seer questioned why governments hesitate to officially recognise the cow as a "mother". He argued that merely calling it an animal contradicts faith. With the 'Gavishti Yatra' set to begin from Gorakhpur, the pitch is only getting louder. The seer's statement has intensified political tensions in Rajasthan, where demands to make the cow Rajya Mata (State Mother) have been gaining ground.

Ex-CM Gehlot targets delays in public works

Ahead of PM Narendra Modi's April 21 inauguration of the Pachpadra Refinery in Rajasthan, the politics is sharpening on it. Former CM Ashok Gehlot has turned up the heat on the BJP. Calling the project the biggest chapter of his 'Intezar Shastra' (science of delay) series, Gehlot alleged a 7-year delay under BJP. "I'm glad the PM is inaugurating it, but had our government continued, it would've been ready much earlier," he said. He also flagged a cost escalation—from ₹37,000 crore to nearly ₹80,000 crore. Through 'Intzar Shashtra', his campaign on X, Gehlot is spotlighting "delayed" projects, accusing the BJP of slowing public works.

24 arrested
in Kuwait over alleged terror financing, including five former lawmakers

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • LS: Light Snow • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	21	1	SNY	Los Angeles	20	12	SNY
Colombo	28	24	SNY	Melbourne	26	15	LC
Dhaka	31	19	SNY	Moscow	4	2	SNY
Dubai	26	21	SNY	New York	7	2	SNY
Houston	31	19	TDS	Singapore	28	25	TDS
Istanbul	33	21	SNY	Toronto	1	-5	SNY
London	13	9	SNY	Washington	3	-2	SNY

Iran says US 'failed' to win trust in Pakistan talks

Tehran highlights its 'forward-looking' proposals, war experience; US says Iran resisted curbs on its nuclear programme & rejected final offer

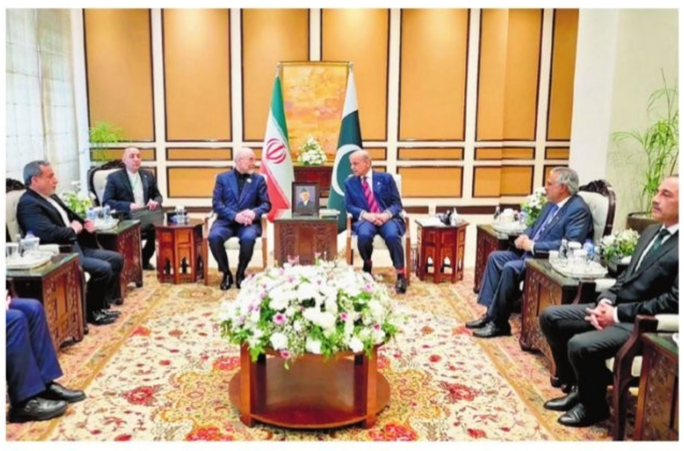
ISLAMABAD

THE United States "failed" to win Iran's trust during historic negotiations in Pakistan aimed at resolving the West Asia conflict, the top Iranian negotiator said on Sunday. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the Iranian Parliament Speaker who led his country's delegation in marathon peace talks with the US in Pakistan, made the remarks after the two sides failed to reach an agreement.

In a series of posts on X, Ghalibaf said that the Iranian delegation raised "forward-looking initiatives, but the opposite side ultimately failed to win the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round of negotiations." "Before the negotiations, I emphasised that we have the necessary good faith and will, but due to the experiences of the two previous wars, we have no trust in the opposing side," Ghalibaf said.

"The US has realised our logic and principles, and now it has time to decide whether it can earn our trust or not?" he added. He asserted that Iran pursues powerful diplomacy, alongside military force, for upholding the rights of the Iranian people.

"We believe that diplomacy of power is another approach alongside military struggle for the realisation of the rights of the Iranian people, and we will not cease our efforts to consolidate the achievements of forty days of national defence by the Iranians for a moment," he said. He also thanked Pakistan for facilitating the peace talks. He also lauded the "heroic people of Iran" for supporting the negotiators and appreciated his team for their tireless efforts during marathon talks in Pakistan.



Pakistan's Army Chief and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir (R), Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar (2R), Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (3R) during their meeting with Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (2L) prior to the US-Iran peace talks in Islamabad | AFP

WAR WATCH

US Vice President JD Vance, who led the American delegation, said the talks failed to reach a peace deal, citing Tehran not forgoing its nuclear programme as one of the key sticking points. "We leave here with a very simple proposal, a method of understanding that this is our final and best offer. We'll see if the Iranians accept it," Vance said at a press conference after the talks before leaving for the US.

The Pakistan-brokered negotiations began Saturday, four days after the two sides announced a six-day ceasefire.

It was the first direct, high-level engagement between Iran and the US since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The conflict began after the US and Israel launched attacks on Iran on February 28, paralysing global energy markets and disrupting trade.

Iran had laid out a 10-point plan for the talks that included demands for the withdrawal of US forces from West Asia, the lifting of sanctions against Iran, and allowing it to control the Strait of Hormuz. *PTI*

Talks ended without deal due to US's 'excessive demands'

ISLAMABAD: After talks in Pakistan ended without an agreement, Tehran blamed Washington of their "excessive demands". Iranian spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said some consensus was reached, but differences remained on key issues. Discussions covered sanctions, war reparations, the nuclear issue and the Strait of Hormuz. He said exchanges were held during talks, adding diplomacy would continue despite mistrust from past conflicts and no expectation of quick agreement.

Pak's 1st vessel docks at Karachi after Hormuz reopening

KARACHI: MV Selen became Pakistan's first container vessel to reach Karachi Port after the Strait of Hormuz reopened following the US-Iran ceasefire. Arriving from Jebel Ali, the ship docked on Saturday night, the Karachi Port Trust said, signalling the resumption of container trade and boosting confidence in maritime supply chains. The strait, a route for about 20% of global energy flows, reopened under a truce, but stalled US-Iran talks have raised concerns over the ceasefire and the waterway's stability.

GLOBAL LEADERS URGE U.S.-IRAN TO CONTINUE TALKS

PARIS

WORLD figures urged the United States and Iran to keep negotiating after marathon Washington-Tehran talks in Islamabad ended on Sunday without a deal to end the war in the West Asia.

EU urges diplomacy

Diplomacy is "essential" to resolve the war in the Middle East, a European Union spokesman said.

Noting failed US-Iranian talks hosted by Pakistan, EU foreign affairs spokesman Anouar El Anouni said "we salute Pakistan for its mediation efforts" and added Brussels would contribute to further efforts to reach a settlement in coordination with its partners

Putin offers mediation

Russian President Vladimir Putin told his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian that he was ready to help mediate efforts to achieve peace in the West Asia, the Kremlin said.

"Vladimir Putin emphasised his readiness to further facilitate the search for a political and diplomatic settlement to the conflict, and to mediate efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East," the Kremlin said in its readout of the call.

UK disappointed

"It's obviously disappointing that we haven't yet seen a breakthrough in negotiations and an end to this war in Iran that is a sustainable one," UK health minister Wes Streeting told *Sky News*.

"As ever in diplomacy, you're failing, until you succeed. So while these talks may not have ended in success, (it) doesn't mean there isn't merit in continuing to try," he added.

Iranians show defiance

Meanwhile, Iranians reacted with disappointment and defiance after US talks ended without a deal, casting doubt on a fragile ceasefire. With internet access blocked, many rely on state media as uncertainty grips Tehran. Residents blamed Washington and backed Iran's stance, saying gains from the conflict must be preserved. *AFP*

A woman casts her ballot at a polling station during the Hungarian parliamentary election in Budapest, Hungary | AP

Hungary votes in high-stakes poll that could unseat Orban

BUDAPEST

Hungarians cast ballots Sunday in what is seen as Europe's most consequential election this year, setting a record turnout in a vote that could unseat populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban, an ally of Donald Trump, after 16 years in power.

It marks a key moment for Orban, the European Union's longest-serving leader and one of its biggest antagonists, who has traveled a long road from his early days as a liberal, anti-Soviet firebrand to the Russia-friendly nationalist admired today by the global far-right.

Initial results are expected Sunday night. The parties of both Orbán and his top challenger, Péter Magyar, said they had received reports of electoral violations, suggesting some results could be disputed by both sides.

Orban, 62, said the campaign had been "a great national moment on our side" and thanked activists and supporters for their work.

"I'm here to win," he said. Turnout by 6:30 p.m. was over 77%, according to the National Election Office, a record number in any election in Hungary's post-Communist history. Magyar said he and his Tisza party were "cautiously confident." He warned against any violence and called on supporters to "keep our cool." *AFP*

Will continue facilitating US-Iran talks, says Pakistan foreign minister Dar

ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN on Sunday said it will continue to facilitate talks between the US and Iran, while urging both sides to uphold the ceasefire. In a brief statement to the media after marathon negotiations between the US and Iran ended without a breakthrough, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Pakistan has helped mediate several rounds of "intense and constructive" discussions over the past 24 hours.

"I, along with the Defence Forces Army Chief Field Marshal Syed Sim Munir, helped mediate several rounds of intense and constructive negotiations between the two sides that continued through the last 24 hours and ended this morning," he said. Expressing hope for progress, Dar said both sides should maintain a positive spirit to achieve durable peace and regional stability.

"It is imperative that the parties continue to uphold their commitment to the ceasefire," he said. Dar said Pakistan would continue to play its role in facilitating engagement and dialogue between Iran and the United States in the coming days.

"Pakistan has been and will continue to play its role to facilitate engagements and dialogue between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the US in the days to come," he said.

Dar also expressed gratitude to both sides for accepting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's proposal for a ceasefire and acknowledging Pakistan's mediatory role. The Pakistan-brokered talks — the first direct, high-level engagement between the two sides since the 1979 Islamic Revolution — were watched globally amid increasing expectations of a breakthrough. The Iranian delegation led by Mohammad Baqir Ghalibaf arrived in Islamabad Friday night, while the US team headed by JD Vance reached Saturday morning. *PTI*

Airstrike hits market in Nigeria killing 100 civilians

MAIDUGURI

A Nigerian Air Force strike targeting jihadi rebels hit a local market in northeastern Nigeria, killing over 100 civilians including children and injuring many others, a rights group and local media reported on Sunday. Officials confirmed a misfire without providing details.

Amnesty International cited survivors as saying that at least 100 people were killed in the airstrike on Saturday on a village in Yobe state, near the border with Borno state, which is the epicenter of the jihadi insurgency that has ravaged the region for over a decade. "We have their pictures and they include children," Isa Sanusi, Amnesty International's Nigeria director, told The Associated Press, referring to the casualties.

"We are in touch with people that are there, we spoke with the hospital," he said. "We spoke with the person in charge of casualties, and we spoke with the victims." A worker at the Geidam General hospital, in Yobe, said at least 23 people injured in the incident were receiving treatment. The worker spoke anonymously as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

Such misfires are common in Nigeria, where the military often conducts air raids to battle armed groups who control vast forest enclaves. At least 500 civilians have died since 2017 in such misfires, according to an AP tally of reported deaths. Security analysts point to loopholes in intelligence gathering as well as insufficient coordination between ground troops, air assets and stakeholders. The large, remote market located near the Borno-Yobe border is known to be often used by Boko Haram jihadis to buy food supplies. *AP*

ASIA MATTERS

INDONESIA

WOMEN FACE JAIL FOR BLASPHEMY

Indonesian police said Sunday they had arrested two women on blasphemy charges after a video showing one of them stepping on a Quran went viral on social media in the Muslim-majority country. The two women, whose names and ages were not disclosed, were nabbed by police in Banten province this week and risk five years in prison if found guilty under blasphemy law. The law forbids anyone from making statements offending one of the country's six official religions or trying to prevent someone from adhering to one of those religions.

SINGAPORE

PIO JAILED IN FORGERY CASE

An Indian-origin man was sentenced to seven weeks in jail in connection with a forgery case. Vijendren Tanapal, 38, pleaded guilty to two forgery charges involving two Japanese clients while working as a wealth planning manager at a bank, *The Pioneer* reported. He will begin serving his sentence on July 31, the report said.

THAILAND

GOVT URGED TO RESUME BORDER TALKS

The government of Cambodia has urged Thailand's leadership to resume talks as soon as possible on their disputed border, a long-standing disagreement that led to deadly clashes last year. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said on Saturday that he "strongly hopes" the two neighbours will be able to work together "quickly and with sincerity". "This will be foundation for long-lasting peace that would allow our people living along shared border to live peacefully. Cambodia is fully ready," Prime Minister Hun Manet said in a statement posted on social media.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

An Orthodox believer sets a candle during Easter service in Saint Michael's Golden-Domed Cathedral in Kyiv | AFP

China sets up new Xinjiang county near PoK and Afghanistan border

BEIJING

CHINA has set up a new county in its volatile Xinjiang province near Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and the Afghanistan border in an apparent move to beef up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration of Uyghur separatist militants.

The county, named Cenling, is located near the Karakoram mountain range and close to the borders with PoK and Afghanistan, underscoring its strategic significance.

This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region, in just over a year. India last year lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its union territory of Ladakh.

Hean includes much of the disputed Aksai Chin plateau, which is part of Ladakh occupied by China in the 1962 war and has remained a focal point of the India-China border dispute. The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region government announced the establishment of Cenling on March 26, though details of its administrative divisions and exact boundaries were not specified.

It will be administered by Kashgar prefecture, according to a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post. Kashgar, a historic city located on the ancient Silk Road, is a strategic gateway connecting China with South and Central Asia. PTI

China eases some curbs on Taiwan ties

BANGKOK: China said it would resume select links with Taiwan, including direct flights and imports of aquaculture products, signalling limited easing of tensions. The move follows talks between Chinese leaders and Taiwan's opposition Kuomintang. Beijing also proposed closer party communication, even as broader political strains between the two sides persist

Russia, Ukraine trade blame over Easter pause violations

KYIV

RUSSIA and Ukraine accused each other of violating a Kremlin-declared Easter ceasefire Sunday, as Orthodox Christians gathered to celebrate the holiday despite Moscow's 4-year-long war against its neighbor.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday declared a 32-hour ceasefire over the Easter weekend, ordering Russian forces to halt hostilities from 4 p.m. on Saturday until the end of Sunday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy promised to abide by the ceasefire, but warned there would be a swift military response to any violations. The General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces said in a statement Sunday that it had recorded 2,299 ceasefire violations by 7am, including assaults, shelling and small drone launches.

It said that the use of long-range drones, missiles or guided bombs had not been reported. A Ukrainian military officer told The Associated Press on Saturday that Russian forces had continued to attack their positions.

Russia's Defense Ministry also said Sunday it had recorded 1,971 ceasefire violations by Ukrainian forces, including drone strikes. The head of Russia's Belgorod region, Vyacheslav Gladkov, said Sunday that rescuers uncovered the bodies of two civilians who were killed in a Ukrainian attack on Saturday afternoon.

Outside Kyiv, thousands gathered at an open-air national heritage park to celebrate Easter despite skepticism that a truce would hold.

Worshippers clustered outside wooden churches to take part in the annual blessing of baskets for the holiday table. Families carried dyed eggs and paska cakes baked the night before, while many women wore colorful scarves.

EXPRESS READ

Saudi, Qatar to give $5 billion boost to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to receive $5 billion from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, easing pressure on its fragile reserves, a media report said. The support comes as Islamabad prepares to repay $3.5 billion to the UAE. The inflow is expected to stabilise finances amid IMF-linked commitments, repayments and ongoing economic challenges, while supporting external balance and confidence in recovery efforts.

1st life-size Vivekananda statue unveiled in Seattle

NEW YORK: A life-size statue of Swami Vivekananda was unveiled in Seattle, marking the first such installation hosted by a US city. Installed at Westlake Square, the bronze monument reflects cultural ties and inclusivity, and was unveiled by local leaders and Indian officials, highlighting India-US links, honouring Vivekananda's global legacy, and strengthening people-to-people ties in the Pacific Northwest region.

₹48,213 CR Foreign investors withdrew from domestic capital market in the first 10 days of April as rising geopolitical tensions and global economic uncertainties reduced risk appetite

Digital payments: More safety, longer pause

Fresh measures provide customers greater control, more time to act, and stronger protection against fraud

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

INDIA'S digital payments ecosystem has grown at a very fast pace, but the sharp rise in online frauds is forcing a rethink on how instant payments should be. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a set of measures that introduce calibrated friction into high-risk transactions—aimed at giving users more control and time to prevent fraud.

For consumers, these measures could mean a slight shift in how digital payments are experienced. High-value transactions may no longer be instantaneous, and additional checks could come into play in certain situations.

However, these measures also provide greater control, more time to act, and stronger protection against fraud. However, these measures also provide greater control, more time to act, and stronger protection against fraud.

At the heart of the proposals is a simple idea -- slow down suspicious or high-value transactions just enough to stop scams, without disrupting everyday payments.

Cooling-off window

The RBI has proposed a mandatory delay of up to one hour for digital transactions above ₹10,000. This would apply to authorised push payments—where users themselves initiate the transfer, often under pressure from fraudsters.

The idea is to create a cooling-off window during which the transaction can still be cancelled. Fraudsters typically rely on urgency and psychological manipulation to push victims into acting quickly. By introducing a pause, the RBI

hopes to break that chain and give users time to reassess.

For consumers, this means while smaller, routine payments will remain instant, larger transfers may take slightly longer.

Extra protection for users

Recognising that certain sections are more prone to fraud, the RBI has proposed additional safeguards for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. For transactions above ₹50,000, these users may be required to get approval from a trusted individual nominated by them.

The trusted person framework is designed to counter scams involving impersonation or coercion, where fraudsters pose as family members, officials, or service providers. By adding a second layer of human verification, the RBI aims to reduce chances of large financial losses in such cases.

While this could introduce some delay in high-value payments, it strengthens protection for vulnerable customers.

Curbing mule activity

Another key proposal targets the misuse of bank accounts as conduits for laundering fraud proceeds. The RBI has suggested capping annual credits at ₹25 lakh for accounts that have not undergone enhanced due diligence. If inflows exceed this threshold, excess amount could be treated as shadow credit—held back until the bank verifies legitimacy of the transaction. If satisfactory proof is not provided in time, the funds may be reversed. For genuine users, this could mean additional documentation in case of unusually high inflows. But the broader aim is to choke the network of mule accounts that enable large-scale fraud.

Universal kill switch

Perhaps the most user-centric proposal is the expansion of customer-driven controls across all digital payment channels.

IN CONVERSATION

SHARAD AGARWAL
Chief executive officer, Sify Infinit Spaces Limited

'We're planning to be present in every state with Edge data centres'

SIFY Infinit Spaces Ltd, which has 200 MW of operational data centre capacity across seven locations, is gearing up for a public listing to raise ₹3,700 crore. Of this, ₹2,500 crore will be deployed to expand capacity by an additional 300 MW. Sify Infinit CEO **Sharad Agarwal** told **Sanal Sudevan** that the company currently holds about 15% market share and aims to maintain it amid rising demand for data centres in India. Edited **excerpts**:

How have you segmented your data centre focus?
Our focus is across three segments — large campuses catering to hyperscalers and AI cloud companies, where demand is around 100 MW; enterprise-grade data centres with requirements of up to 50 MW; and edge data centres, which are smaller facilities of up to 10 MW. Over time, we plan to establish a presence in every state through these edge data centres.

What is your strategy for South India, and when can we expect the Visakhapatnam facility to be operational?
We intend to expand into more cities in South India, aligned with our edge data centre growth strategy.

The commissioning of the Vizag facility depends on factors such as the cable landing system and customer onboarding. We are actively scouting for customers and expect operations to begin within the next one to two years.

How will the IPO proceeds be utilised?
Out of the ₹3,700 crore IPO, ₹2,500 crore will be invested in the business, which will enable us to set up an additional 300 MW of data centre capacity in India.

We intend to expand into more cities in South India, aligned with our Edge data centre growth strategy. The commissioning of the Vizag unit depends on factors like cable landing system and customer onboarding

What is the status of your listing process?
We have completed investor roadshows, and final valuation and book-building discussions are currently underway.

Why is India attracting global interest in the data centre ecosystem?
There are several reasons. First, India's population of 1.4 billion generates massive data demand, and the government's push for data sovereignty requires domestic storage capacity. Second, India does not face energy constraints; power reliability at 220 kV and 400 kV levels is strong. Third, there is significant support from both the Centre and state governments, with several states introducing dedicated data centre policies. Compared to other geographies where operators rely on behind-the-meter gas-fired power, which is 150-200% more expensive, India offers a cost advantage through grid power.

What policy changes would you like to see?
The government should continue to focus on providing single-window clearances to facilitate faster data centre deployment.

How do you view competition from hyperscalers setting up their own facilities?
Most hyperscalers entering India are US-based. Even in the US, a large co-location market exists despite hyperscalers building their own facilities. If they are unable to fully meet their requirements there, it is unlikely they will do so in India. This creates a strong case for co-location players like us.

How are you managing your supply chain and equipment sourcing?
Nearly 90% of our suppliers are domestic, covering engineering, electrical, mechanical, and structural equipment. These include diesel generators, transformers, electrical busway systems, chillers, and panels. We do not invest in GPUs, semiconductors, CPUs, or storage—these are handled by our customers. Optical fibre and cable landing infrastructure are managed by our parent, Sify Technologies Ltd.

MONEY-WISE

THE MAGIC OF MULTI-ASSET FUNDS

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR
Head of LKW-India.
He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com
(Views expressed here are personal)

AROUND a decade and a half ago, while dining with the overseas representative of a foreign collaborator of a leading Indian mutual fund house, I was intrigued by his expression of curiosity as to why the appetite for hybrid funds in India was somewhat muted, unlike in the Western world.

On returning to my office and checking the data for 7 and 10 years, I found that not only had some hybrid funds done nearly as well as many equity fund categories but also protected capital well on the downside. It was a lesson well learnt and that too from a casual conversation over a meal. I have used it as a bedrock for my portfolio, ever since and am none the worse for doing that.

The latest kid on the block, so to speak, from this category is Multi Asset Mutual Funds (MAFs) which are increasingly becoming a preferred investment option for investors seeking diversification, stability, and long-term wealth creation. As the name suggests, these funds invest across multiple asset classes—primarily equity, debt, and commodities (like gold and silver). As per SEBI regulations, a Multi Asset Fund must invest at least 10% in a minimum of three different asset classes, which ensures true diversification.

One of the biggest advantages of multi-asset funds is their ability to balance risk and return. Equity as an asset class offers growth potential but comes inbuilt with volatility. Debt instruments provide stability and regular income while commodities like gold often act as a hedge during economic uncertainty or inflationary periods. By combining these asset classes in a single portfolio, MAFs aim to reduce overall portfolio volatility while participating inthe market upside.

Another key feature of multi-asset funds is dynamic asset allocation. Fund managers adjust the exposure to different asset classes based on market conditions, valuations, and macroeconomic factors. For instance, during periods of high equity valuations or market uncertainty, the fund may cut equity exposure and increase allocation to debt or gold. Conversely, when equity markets are attractive, allocation may shift more towards equities. This allocation strategy helps in managing downside risks and capturing opportunities across market cycles.

From a taxation perspective, most multi asset funds in India are treated as equity-oriented funds if their equity allocation (including arbitrage) exceeds 65%. In such cases, a holding period of more than 12 months qualifies as long-term capital gains (LTCG) taxed at 12.5% (on gains exceeding ₹1.25 lakh), while units held for 12 months or less attract short-term capital gains (STCG) tax at 20%. However, if the equity allocation is lower, it could be taxed as a debt fund, which may impact post-tax returns.

At the same time, investors should be aware that returns from multi asset funds may not always match pure equity funds during strong bull markets, as a portion of the portfolio remains allocated to relatively stable assets like debt or gold.

MONEY MATTERS

WHY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE YOUR MONEY PROBLEMS

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR
(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

THERE is an ongoing conflict in West Asia that is likely to hurt economies even after it ends. India will not be an exception. Let that sink in. The world's fastest-growing large economy could still do better than many others. However, your money is at odds with any semblance of stability. The purchasing managers' index (PMI) data shows that India has experienced expansionary activity every month. Yet the labour market in India has softened, with unemployment rising, according to the Reserve Bank of India's latest monetary policy report. That is likely to hurt the income side of your household balance sheet if you are the one looking for a new job or expanding your work profile to boost your income.

On the other side, inflation is likely to rise. "Energy price spikes driven by the war in West Asia pose risks to the domestic inflation outlook, going forward," said the latest RBI monetary policy committee report. That means while income uncertainty rises, your consumption is likely to become more expensive.

That is also reflected in the latest forward-looking consumer survey published by the RBI and in the monetary policy literature. Consumer confidence for the current period deteriorated, and for the year ahead, though optimistic, also declined from the previous round of a similar survey. The RBI survey also shows that household perceptions of employment have worsened for now and for the year ahead.

It is a strange situation in which we hear stories of faster economic growth but poor job prospects.

A recent working paper from Bruegel, a European think tank, reveals that India's structural economic bottlenecks—primarily a persistent jobs crisis and a lack of manufacturing depth—are directly impacting personal financial stability, leading to lower savings and a growing reliance on debt. García Herrero and R. Sengupta argue in their paper titled 'Tackling India's jobs plight: underutilised levers and lessons from China' that at the heart of India's economic challenge is a structural paradox: high GDP growth is failing to generate sufficient quality employment.

A primary reason for that is a low-par expansion in the manufacturing sector. About 42% of India's workforce is still employed in low-productivity agriculture, which contributes barely 15-16% to the gross domestic product. Despite that, the rural story is not such a problem for India. RBI's report observes a strong growth in rural consumption.

The problem is more pronounced among the educated class, where unemployment among the 15-24 age group is as high as 45%, according to the European think tank.

"Even for those who find work, the 'quality' of jobs is a major concern. The economy has leapfrogged from agriculture directly into high-skill services like IT and finance, which employ relatively few people and offer limited opportunities for the broader population," the report observes.

How macro problems hit your wallet

This "jobless growth" isn't just a government statistic. It translates directly into personal money problems in several ways.

Firstly, it erodes your savings. That is reflected in the drop in the net financial savings rate to 5% of GDP in 2026, from over 7% in 2021. You end up dipping into your retirement savings to maintain your current lifestyle.

Secondly, it creates a debt trap. As savings decline, you tend to borrow more money for your consumption. The share of retail credit in total bank credit rose to 33% in 2023-24 from 19% in 2010-11. While credit card loans remained stable in the year to January 2026, borrowing against gold more than doubled as gold prices continued to rise. That indicates an effort to mobilise money to meet higher monthly or other household expenses.

AI growth: IT firms turn to acquisitions

PADMINI DHRUVARAJ @ Bengaluru

THE country's leading information technology companies are accelerating acquisitions as slowing demand and the rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) begin to reshape the sector's growth model.

The latest sign of this shift came from Wipro, which this week agreed to acquire Mindsprint from Singapore-based Olam Group for $375 million, alongside an eight-year technology services contract worth more than $1 billion.

This comes after Infosys in March acquired Optimum Healthcare IT and Stratus for $560 million. TCS also announced plans to acquire US-based Coastal Cloud for $700 million, while Coforge signed apact to take over Encora for $2.35 billion, both in December. And in August last year, Wipro acquired

Harman DTS for $375 million.

The move is being seen as one of the signals that large IT firms are using mergers and acquisitions to protect revenue growth as clients cut spending on traditional outsourcing work. For years, India's biggest software exporters relied heavily on large outsourcing deals in application maintenance, infrastructure management and back-office support. But that model is now under pressure as firms across the world adopt AI tools to automate coding, customer support and internal operations.

Industry analysts say the shift is forcing IT firms to buy specialised capabilities rather than wait for slow organic expansion. "This is no longer opportunistic deal-making. It is a strategic response to structural revenue pressure from AI-led automation and weak discretionary tech spending," said an analyst tracking the sector at a domestic broking firm. "Firms are acquiring domain expertise, cloud engineering and AI-native capabilities to defend growth over the next two-three years."

Acquisitions are focused on AI engineering, data platforms, cybersecurity and sector-specific consulting. Market watchers expect more such transactions from large-cap and mid-cap firms in the coming quarters, especially as clients demand measurable productivity gains from AI deployments.

The pressure comes at a difficult time for the sector. Recent previews of the Q4FY26 earnings suggest constant-currency revenue growth for India's top IT firms is expected to remain subdued, with much of the reported growth being helped by a weaker rupee rather than stronger business momentum.

Govt increases 5-kg LPG supply, revs up PNG connections amid Iran crisis

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

AMID supply chain disruptions triggered by the West Asia conflict, the Centre has ramped up supply of 5-kg LPG cylinders and accelerated the rollout of piped natural gas (PNG) connections to mitigate the situation.

As per an official statement, more than 13 lakh 5-kg free trade LPG cylinders have been sold since March 23, with daily sales rising above 100,000 units, as the authorities expand LPG access to migrant workers and low-income consumers.

Besides this, more than 424,000 new piped natural gas (PNG) connections have been activated since March, with more than 30,000 consumers surrendering LPG connections as part of the transition.

The six-week long war in

West Asia has disrupted global energy supply. India relied on import of half of its crude oil, 40% of its gas and 85-90% of LPG from the region was also impacted. While it has managed to make up for the shortfall in crude oil by sourcing from other regions, LPG supplies have been impacted.

The government has prioritised LPG supply to domestic households at the cost of cuts in supplies to commercial users like hotels and restaurants. To make up for the shortfall for those who do not have subsidised cooking gas LPG connections, it has ramped up supply of market priced 5 kg cylinders.

Meanwhile, global energy major Shell plc has ramped up natural gas supplies to India. As per a PTI report, Shell emerged as a leading supplier in last month's bulk LNG procurement by Indian fertiliser firms, securing a supply of 4 trillion British thermal units out of 6 TBtus volumes tendered.

With supplies from India's largest LNG supplier in Qatar disrupted by the West Asia conflict, Shell plc's India arm stepped in, importing its largest-ever monthly LNG volumes in March.

TN surfers Sivaraj, Kamali crowned nat'l champs

In a thrilling men's Open surfing final **Sivaraj Babu** of Tamil Nadu emerged as champion with a score of 13.63, clinching win by a razor-thin margin of just 0.30 points over Srikanth D, who finished at 13.33 in the Little Andaman Pro 2026. The women's Open final saw a dominant performance from TN's Kamali Moorthy, who defended her crown.

Ayush Shetty (L) with other podium finishers on Sunday | BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS

Historic service: Ayush bags silver

Asia C'ships: After a memorable campaign, Karnataka shuttler vows to come back stronger

ANMOL GURUNG @ Chennai

AYUSH Shetty has been the talk of the town for the last few days and understandbly so. At the Ningbo Olympic Sports Center in China, the 20-year-old, having already broken a long-standing barrier at the Badminton Asia Championships, was seeking yet another ground-breaking win in the final on Sunday — a victory that would have left a far-reaching impact on India's sporting landscape. However, he fell just short of his mark, pocketing a silver medal in the process. He might have missed out on gold but that does not diminish his overall accomplishment.

Having beaten some of the cream of the sport, including World No 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn, in the last few days, Ayush faced another steep hurdle in the form of Shi Yu Qi. Ayush might have discovered a rare fire in his locker in the build-up to the final but Shi, a seasoned star who has played many high-stakes ties at this level, was always going to be a tall order for the Indian. Moreover, Shi had the advantage of playing in familiar conditions in front of home fans.

The Indian soon found that out. Egged on by the vocal fans, Shi came, conquered and sealed the tie in no time. Ayush, playing his first final at this level, seemed to be overawed by the occasion as Shi kept picking up points at will with some crafty shots — pinpoint smashes & delicate shots delivered with deceptions on odd occasions — and all over the court. In the second game, Ayush, having made some adjustments to his game, put up an improved show with some sharp returns and good defence. However, just when it seemed like he would take charge (in the early stages of Game 2), Shi regained control of the game before going to capture the match. In the end, the score read 21-8, 21-10 in Shi's favour.

In isolation, that score indicates a grim reading. But given his exploits over the last few days, Ayush can walk away with his head held high. Moreover, Ayush is barely 20 and still getting accustomed to playing crunch matches with big players at the elite level. "It was a really good week for me. I had some great wins and all the matches were really tough. I'm really proud with the way I played throughout this week," Ayush said after the final. "For the final, I'm a bit disappointed. I wanted to have a great match but Shi Yu Qi was by far the better player today. He kept the pressure going and he never let me come back into the match. I need to work on my endurance, my strength and variation from the back. It's a good lesson for me and I'll take it as a learning."

> **Achieving this (reaching the final) after 61 years is really special for me & it motivates me to keep working harder and come back even stronger.**
>
> Ayush Shetty

Dinesh Khanna is the one and only men's singles player from India to win the continental event in 1965. That just highlights Ayush's astronomical effort. He might have just missed out on Khanna's feat but Ayush is pleased with his overall display. "Achieving this after 61 years (reaching the final) is really special for me and it motivates me to keep working harder and come back even stronger."

RR dugout controversy: Medical emergency reason?

FIROZ MIRZA/GOMESH S @ Chennai

RAJASTHAN Royals' manager Romi Bhinder has come under the scanner for using a mobile phone in the team dugout during their IPL match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Friday. Bhinder has been served a notice and asked to explain his situation to the Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) of the BCCI in the next 48 hours. Sources in the know of things, however, claimed that Bhinder was carrying the phone as a precautionary measure because both his lungs collapsed in the past and he was on ventilator for nearly a week before being shifted to the ICU where he spent around three weeks.

Meanwhile, a former ACU official also confirmed that one mobile phone can be carried to the dugout, preferably by the team manager, for medical emergencies but the calls could only be received or made from the dressing room.

Romi Bhinder spent nearly a month in hospital | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Both of his lungs had collapsed and that medical emergency meant he spent nearly a month in a Nagpur hospital," one of the sources told this daily. Bhinder was caught by the cameras using the mobile. What may have compounded the matter was opener Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was having a look at his mobile. Since then, the clip has gone viral. It led to the BCCI serving Bhinder a notice.

"Romi has lost more than 10 kilos due to medical issues. He has asthma as well because of which he is advised not to walk a long distance or climb stairs frequently. He is with the team and performed various roles for the franchise. Hence he knows the rules and regulations but that phone was in his possession due to medical reasons. Besides, possessing a mobile phone and a laptop in the dugout is allowed as per the protocol. The only problem was the usage but again he was not making calls or receiving any of them. He was just scrolling his phone. He has time and he will try to explain his point of view to the ACU officials," added another source.

The match was held at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati. Rajasthan won the contest by six wickets, chasing 202 in just 18 overs with Sooryavanshi and Dhruv Jurel slamming fifties. "We are hopeful that the ACU officials will keep Romi's medical conditions in mind before arriving at a conclusion. The problem was he had to walk at least 50 steps before climbing around 20 steps to reach the dressing room and do the same to return to the dug out. That must have forced him to check the phone at the dug out itself," one of the above-mentioned sources added.

What PMOA protocol says

- The league is conducted using the BCCI's Minimum Standards for Players and Match Officials Areas (PMOA).
- As per the protocols, mobile phones and other electronic communications equipment are not allowed to be used in the PMOA other than for a few members of the team.
- The team manager may use a phone in the dressing room area but not in the dug out. The analyst may use his computer at the analyst table.
- Player and support staff items i.e. phones, smart watches or any other communication devices should be turned off and given to the team SLO (Security Liaison Officer) for storage on arrival at the stadium.

Skipper Patidar leads from front as RCB cruise past MI

CHANDRA PRABHU @ Chennai

FIFTIES from Phil Salt (78), Virat Kohli (50), Rajat Patidar (53) and Tim David's late strikes (34 n.o) gave Royal Challengers Bengaluru the impetus to put on a mammoth total of 240/4 — their second highest of the season — and beat Mumbai Indians by 18 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in the IPL on Sunday. MI could only manage 222/5 in 20 overs, registering their third loss of the season.

Walking in at 185/2 in the 15th over, David gave the final push in the death — something he has done immensely well so far. Batting against his former team, David got his first boundary in the 17th over. He slapped a slow ball of Hardik Pandya towards extra covers. In the same over, the Australian slammed a free-hit — a knee-height full toss — into the stands for six He then went on to take on Jasprit Bumrah for a boundary and a maximum in the following over.

For the Mumbai pacers, it was another night to forget, especially after the hammering they received in Guwahati a few days ago. Bumrah is yet to open his IPL account for the season, but kept it tight with his bowling. Along with Hardik, other pacers like Shardul Thakur and Trent Boult, continued to leak runs, while spinners Mitchell Santner and Mayank Markande were at the receiving ends of aggressive batting from RCB.

Sent in to bat, RCB's opening pair of Salt and Kohli built a solid partnership for the first time this season. The English opener played the aggressor's role to perfection in the 120-run stand. Salt's 36-ball 78 was peppered with six fours and as many sixes, while Kohli, who took 38 balls to score his seventh fifty against MI, hit five boundaries and a six. It seemed like Mumbai would restrict the run-flow when they got Salt out thanks to Shardul Thakur. However, Patidar walked in, and unleashed a flurry of boundaries and maximums. In the process of scoring his fastest fifty in the IPL (17 balls), the RCB skipper scored four boundaries and five sixes. While he is known to be potent against spinners, Patidar's ability to send deliveries far away off pacers brought the stadium to standstill. After slamming legspinner Mayank Markande for three sixes in his first four balls, he moved on to the rest. In Thakur's over, Patidar tonked a full toss delivery over deep-midwicket for four and followed by a maximum over deep-backward point. The Madhya Pradesh batter sent a full-toss delivery frmo Boult flying towards long-on for four. Then, he punished the Kiwi pacer for his poor execution of a yorker delivery, as he squeezed it towards long-off for four, setting the stage for David to take over.

RCB's captain Rajat Patidar plays a reverse scoop against MI on Sunday | BCCI

BRIEF SCORES: RCB 240/4 in 20 ovs (Salt 78, Kohli 50, Patidar 53, David 34 n.o) **bt** MI 222/5 in 20 ovs (Rutherford 71 n.o; Suyash 2/47).

RR TEST FOR SRH AT HOME

Rampant RR will look to tighten their grip on top-spot when they face SRH on Monday. A look...

Rajasthan's domination

Four commanding wins in four games have underlined Rajasthan Royal's dominance. At the heart of their success is the explosive opening pair of Yashasvi Jaiswal & Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who have consistently dismantled opposition attacks.

SRH blow hot and cold

While their batting has shown flashes of brilliance, Sunrisers Hyderabad's bowling that has largely misfired. Now, coming up against a destructive batting lineup, there will be little room for errors.

SRH vs RR, 7.30pm, Hyderabad

LIVE on Star Sports & Hotstar

Prasidh Krishna celebrates a wicket with teammates | BCCI

Gill, Buttler, Prasidh guide Gujarat to win

ENS/AGENCIES @ Lucknow

GUJARAT Titans captain Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler backed up Prasidh Krishna's excellent four-wicket haul with flamboyant half-centuries, guiding their side to a comfortable seven-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants at the Ekana Stadium on Sunday. Prasidh excelled with figures of 4/24 as GT restricted LSG to 164/8. Then, the visitors rode on Gill (56) and Buttler (60) to chase down the target with eight balls to spare. The Titans made 165/3. GT started brightly with Gill and Sai Sudharsan stitching 45 runs off 31 balls before the latter was dismissed by Digvesh Rathi, caught by Avesh Khan at fine leg. Buttler grabbed with both hands the life offered to him by LSG skipper Rishabh Pant. The Englishman was dropped by the wicketkeeper off Rathi in the eighth over. Thereafter, it was the Gill and Buttler show, as they shared 85 runs for the second wicket off just 58 balls and took the attack to the opposition bowlers. But after doing all the hard work, both the batters were out within minutes. But Washington Sundar (21 not out) and Rahul Tewatia (10 not out) anchored GT home from there.

BRIEF SCORES: Lucknow Super Giants 164/8 in 20 ovs (Markram 30; Prasidh 4/28) **lost to** Gujarat Titans 165/3 in 18.5 ovs (Gill 56, Buttler 60).

EXPRESS READ

Barwal breaks 48-yr-old marathon nat'l record

ROTTERDAM (NETHERLANDS): Sawan Barwal on Sunday created history as he broke the 48-year-old marathon national record, the longest standing mark in Indian athletics, at the NN Marathon Rotterdam. Barwal clocked 2 hours 11 minutes and 58 seconds to finish 20th in the elite marathon race and erase the previous national record of 2:12:00 which stood since 1978 in Shivnath Singh's name.

Asian C'ships: Wrestlers Aman, Mukul bag silver

BISHKEK: Olympic medallist Aman Sehrawat settled for a silver while Mukul Dahiya also lost his final on Sunday as India signed off from the Asian Wrestling Championships with 17 medals, including two gold. India finished with a tally of two gold, six silver and nine bronze. Competing in non-Olympic men's freestyle 61kg, Aman lost the high-scoring final 10-13 to Korea's Kwang Myong Kim.

Inaugural Boulders Classic from Tuesday

HYDERABAD: The inaugural Boulders Classic will be jointly staged by Boulder Hills Golf & Country Cluband the DP WorldPGTI at the Boulder Hills Golf & Country Clubfrom April 14 to 17. The tournament will witness participation from 132 professional golfers from across India and overseas, making it one of the most competitive on the DP World PGTI calendar.

Candidates: Setback for Vaishali in Rd 12

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Bengaluru

R VAISHALI'S hopes of winning the Candidates tournament took a beating as she went down to Zhu Jiner in Cyprus on Sunday. The Indian, sole leader with seven points coming into the 12th round, lost to the Chinese in 39 moves. It now means that there are three people separated by half a point as Bibisara Assaubayeva won again to lie 0.5 points off the top two.

This is now set to be one of the closest finishes to a women's Candidates in its current form. A reminder; if more than one player finishes level at the top, tie-breaks with faster time-controls will be employed to decide the challenger for the world title. Of course, Anna Muzychuk could yet join the top of the leaderboard and make it a three-way tie at the top. The 24-year-old had all the momentum in the world after beginning the competition a tad slowly. With the white pieces at her disposal, she also had the chance to take the initiative. But some inconsistencies throughout the middle-game meant Jiner built a head of steam as she launched a multi-pronged attack with her major pieces targetting the white king. To Jiner's credit, she had several situations when she had to find only moves to retain her advantage but she found the best moves and Vaishali resigned in a hopeless position.

Sindarov edges closer

After more than two weeks of enthralling chess by Javokhir Sindarov, he arrived at the board with just one intention. Do not lose, have a quick draw and hang around to see if he would become one of the youngest Candidates winners of all time. Anish Giri lived to fight another day but the Uzbek phenom knows he has almost guaranteed himself a shot at the world title later this year. Going into Round 13 on Tuesday — Monday is a rest day — he leads the field by two points. The only way the Open section will be live going into the final day will be if Giri wins in a game with, of course, the leader, Sindarov. The Dutchman, though, will have a small advantage as he will be playing with the white pieces. If the 20-year-old can avoid defeat, he will be the challenger to D Gukesh's throne. **Results: Open (Rd 12):** Javokhir Sindarov drew with Hikaru Nakamura, Anish Giru drew with Wei Yi, Matthias Bluebaum drew with Fabiano Caruana, Andrey Esipenko drew with R Praggnanandhaa; **Women:** Zhu Jiner bt R Vaishali, Bibisara Assaubayeva bt Kateryna Lagno, Anna Muzychuk drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina, Tan Zhongyi bt Divya Deshmukh.

Back-to-back wickets cost us: Rao

ASHOK VENUGOPAL @ Chennai

AS Delhi Capitals went down to Chennai Super Kings by 23 runs at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Saturday, Y Venugopal Rao, DC Director of Cricket felt losing wickets in quick succession and poor fielding cost them dearly.

Delhi had a good start in the IPL this season with two wins in the first two games. After a narrow loss to Gujarat Titans one expected them to bounce against Chennai Super Kings, but that was not to be. Pathum Nissanka's opening blitz helped the team past 50 runs in no time, but CSK pacers reduced them to 76/4 from which they could never really recover. "I felt losing four wickets in four overs was the turning point. In this format, losing back-to-back wickets always causes harm to the team. I think it is a game of momentum. If we had restricted them to 15-20 fewer, psychologically we would have had a better chance of chasing down a total below 200," Rao said after the match.

On the field, Delhi had a day to forget with multiple misfields and dropped chances against both Ayush Mhatre and Sanju Samson. "It happens," said Rao. "It's a long tournament, we will have one or two bad games. If you look back at the first three games we fielded well, we took good catches. If you remember after the strategic timeout, we missed a run-out and gave life to Sanju in the same over," Rao added, admitting that the team's fielding was poor against CSK.

The former Andhra batter lauded Samson for his century.

Asif strike hands Kashi 1-0 victory

ENS @ Chennai

MOHAMMED Asif's first-half strike proved decisive as Inter Kashi edged Mohammedan Sporting Club 1-0 at the Kalyani Stadium on Sunday. The result sees Inter Kashi climb to eighth in the standings with 11 points from eight matches, while Mohammedan remain rooted to the bottom without a point in seven matches.

In another match, Jason Cumming's stoppage-time goal earned Mohun Bagan Super Giant a 3-2 win over Punjab FC.

FOOTBALL

Yamal sizzles as Barcelona extend Liga lead

AGENCIES @ Barcelona

LAMINE Yamal set up two goals and scored another as Barcelona took a significant step towards defending their La Liga title with a 4-1 derby win over Espanyol on Saturday.

Ferran Torres netted twice with Yamal and Marcus Rashford finding the net late on as the Catalans moved nine points clear of second-placed rivals Real Madrid. Real drew 1-1 against Girona on Friday and with seven games remaining, one of which is a Clasico at Camp Nou in May, Hansi Flick's side have a commanding lead.

After a strong start to the season Espanyol were beaten at home by Barca in the first game of 2026 and have failed to win a match since. They offered little resistance as Flick's side cruised into a two-goal lead.

Yamal created both goals for Torres, whipping in a corner which the Spain international nodded home for his first goal since January. Although some wondered if Flick would rest Yamal for Tuesday's visit to face Atletico, the teenager is always keen to play and Barca fans adore watching him.

Barcelona's Marcus Rashford celebrates his goal with Lamine Yamal | AFP

Spurs crisis, upbeat Man City

LONDON: Tottenham's Premier League plight deepened with a 1-0 defeat at Sunderland on Sunday in Roberto De Zerbi's first match in charge as Manchester City smashed Chelsea to pile the pressure on leaders Arsenal.

Spurs brought in the former Brighton and Marseille boss at the end of last month in a last-ditch bid to save themselves from a catastrophic relegation.

But the Italian failed to inspire his team in a tricky baptism at Sunderland and his team remain mired in the drop zone.

Swaggering City earned a priceless 3-0 win at Stamford Bridge to move six points behind Mikel Arteta's Arsenal with a game in hand and a head-to-head to come against the Gunners next week at the Etihad.

Pep Guardiola's team, denied a fifth straight Premier League title by Liverpool last season, took full advantage of Arsenal's shock 2-1 defeat at home to Bournemouth on Saturday.

Inside VITEEE

prep right

From paper pattern and scoring to time pressure and attempt strategy, here is a practical breakdown of how VITEEE works and where aspirants are most likely to gain or lose marks

YECHURI SASHIKANTH

THE Vellore Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Examination, or VITEEE, is the gateway to BTech admission across VIT's campuses in Vellore, Amaravati, and Bhopal. VIT, a deemed-to-be university, offers a wide basket of BTech programmes across core engineering, computing, electronics, biotechnology, and emerging interdisciplinary fields. Candidates who have completed Class 12 and meet the eligibility requirements can register for VITEEE by paying an application fee of Rs 1,350. The exam is conducted in computer-based mode at centres in India and abroad. It carries multiple-choice questions, each with four options, and runs for two hours and 30 minutes. The paper is available only in English.

How the paper is structured

THE EXAM COVERS FIVE SECTIONS

- Mathematics or Biology: **40 questions**
- Physics: **35 questions**
- Chemistry: **35 questions**
- English: **5 questions**
- Aptitude: **10 questions**

This means the main weight of the paper lies in Mathematics or Biology, Physics, and Chemistry, while English and Aptitude play a smaller but still relevant role.

DID YOU KNOW?

EACH correct answer in VITEEE carries four marks, while every wrong answer results in a one-mark deduction. Unattempted questions receive no marks. That makes accuracy important, since random guessing can reduce the final score. After the exam, candidates move through result declaration, choice filling, rank-based online counselling, provisional seat allotment, and document verification before admission to the allotted BTech programme is confirmed.

Quizzes, simulations, and play-driven tasks are entering classrooms across India, but how far do they improve learning and where do they fall short?

Game-Based Learning Gains

GROUND ACROSS CLASSROOMS, PLATFORMS

SOHAM MITRA

GAME-BASED LEARNING incorporates interactive tasks, quizzes, and mechanics such as levels and feedback loops to make lessons more accessible. In 12,856 government primary schools across Punjab, the Khed Pitara initiative offers play-based learning kits comprising puzzles, toys, and activity resources for children aged three to eight. In Patna and Gurgaon, schools have also begun introducing game-based learning in early-years and primary classrooms, using interactive activities under "Play and Learn" modules to support foundational numeracy and literacy.

In the EdTech space too, companies are introducing tools that combine gaming elements with learning content. Vikalp India, an experiential learning organisation working with schools, has partnered with over 300 private and government institutions across Karnataka, Delhi, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh. Its use has expanded across age groups and subjects, though it is often conflated with gamification.

"Game-based learning provides the full experience of a regular game, with rules, progression, and a clear objective. Gamification, on the other hand, borrows elements like points or badges to drive behaviour. Both have value, but they are not interchangeable," explains Kartic Vaidyanathan, founder of LetsPlayToLearn and guest faculty at IIT Madras.

Where it is more fully realised, game-based learning centres on problem-solving, interaction, and feedback. Teachers then connect these outcomes back to the lesson through quizzes, adaptive practice, or simulations such as ecosystem management or mock parliaments.

The appeal of this approach, educators argue, lies in how it reshapes the learning environment. "We need to provide an environment of safety for slower learners to participate. This psychological safety is provided by games, because in games, losing is an OK state, unlike poor performance in a test or assessment," Vaidyanathan says. He adds that it also enables peer-to-peer learning and offers flexibility to accommodate different learner levels, allowing some students to take on simpler challenges while others move to more advanced ones. There is growing evidence that these methods can lead to real learning gains beyond small or experimental settings. In Andhra Pradesh, a 17-month trial of Personalised Adaptive Learning software involving 14,000 students found learning gains that were 2.3 times higher than in traditional classrooms. Researchers said this was equal to nearly 1.9 extra years of schooling. The same study also found that every additional hour spent on the platform in a year was linked to a further rise in learning levels. Mindspark, another adaptive learning platform used in government schools, has been introduced in 2,217 schools across 13 states, reaching more than 266,000 students. In many of these schools, it takes up about 12.5% of weekly class time, showing that it is being used as part of regular teaching rather than as an occasional add-on. At the early-grade level, Chimple, a gamified learning platform, reported weekly engagement rates between 56.6% and 84.6%. Its data also suggested that children who used it for about 10 minutes a day showed better learning outcomes, including improved Maths scores in Classes 1 and 2.

That does not mean game-based learning is a cure-all. Vaidyanathan cautions against treating it as a universal solution. "Games are not needed in every topic. Novelty could wear out with time. Some games continue to engage even if repeated and others do not. We need to keep experimenting and trying to understand how students respond, and make changes accordingly," he says. Its effectiveness appears to depend on how closely the activity is tied to the lesson. Used well, a quiz, simulation, or role-play can deepen participation and create room for experimentation. Used poorly, the same elements can become little more than distraction. What seems to be emerging is not a replacement for conventional teaching, but a broader effort to make learning more interactive, less punitive, and more responsive to different kinds of learners.

game plan

HOW IT PLAYS OUT

A game-based lesson may begin with a short activity or quiz, move into brief teaching through visuals or storytelling, and then shift to a core task, such as puzzles, problem-solving, or role-play, tied directly to the learning objective

WHERE IT WORKS BEST

GBL is most effective in subjects that involve practice and problem-solving, like maths, science, and language skills. It is less suited to topics that require long-form reading or sustained explanation

Games offer the flexibility of different levels, so slower learners can take easier challenges, while fast learners can do tougher ones.

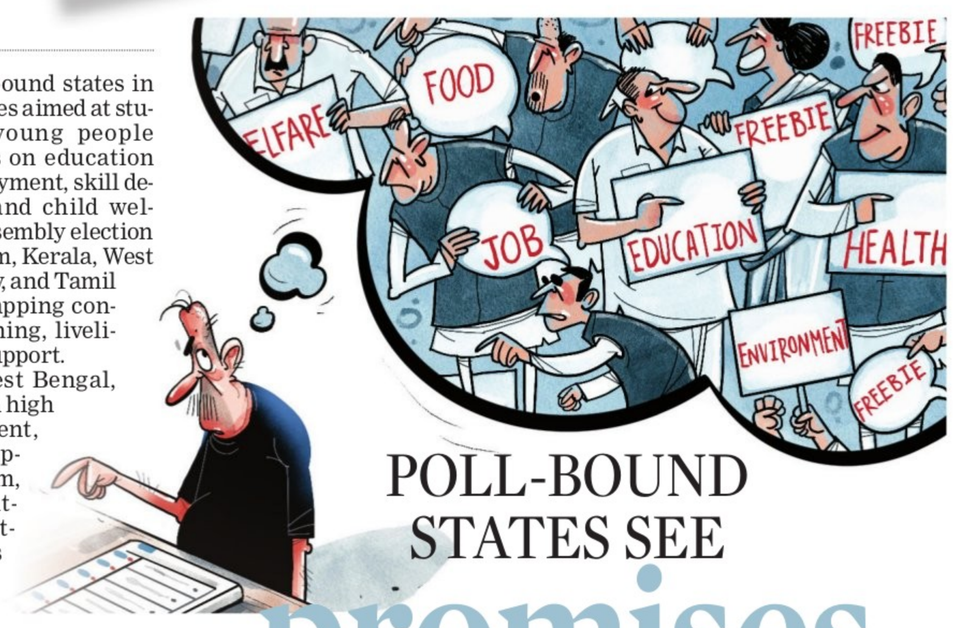
Kartic Vaidyanathan, founder of LetsPlayToLearn and guest faculty at IIT-Madras

KARTHIKEYA S

ACROSS poll-bound states in India, promises aimed at students and young people largely focus on education access, employment, skill development, and child welfare. Legislative Assembly election manifestos in Assam, Kerala, West Bengal, Puducherry, and Tamil Nadu reflect overlapping concerns around learning, livelihoods, and social support.

Keralam and West Bengal, both grappling with high youth unemployment, saw contrasting approaches. In Keralam, manifesto commitments include attempts to address outward migration through Global Capability Centres, stronger campus placements, and even a new campus of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). West Bengal, meanwhile, saw promises of immediate relief, with competing promises of direct monthly transfers ranging from Rs 1,500 to Rs 3,000 for unemployed youth aged 21 to 45 until they find jobs. Some parties also combined welfare with job creation, promising to fill vacant government posts, reinstate cancelled recruitment notifications, and boost employment through MSMEs.

Manifestos in Assam emphasised building education infrastructure and employment pathways, including proposals for a university, medical college, and engineering college in every district, alongside Rs 18,000 crore in flood relief for schools. Parties have also spoken of creating job opportunities for marginalised communities, especially Tea Tribes, while pledging to fill vacant teaching posts and support industrial revival.



POLL-BOUND STATES SEE promises

OF JOBS, CASH SUPPORT, AND SKILLING FOR YOUTH

vote VOWS

In Puducherry, manifesto promises reflect local concerns, including domicile reservations in Group C and D government jobs and quotas for local students in public universities. Employment generation through small-scale industries, IT parks, and initiatives such as Pink Autos for women also figures in the mix. Tamil Nadu's parties continue to combine welfare with development measures, from free laptops and expanded meal schemes to cash transfers for unemployed youth, internships through public-private partnerships, and IT parks in every district. Skilling also appears as a recurring response to concerns around jobs and mobility. Kerala's Back to School programme, Tamil Nadu's Naan Mudhalvan scheme, and the proposed upgrading of 1,000 CM Model Schools in Assam all fall within that broad approach. Entrepreneurship, too, finds space through interest-free loans in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and a Rs 1,000 crore MSME credit guarantee in Assam.

Women-focused welfare remains another major area. Promises include enhanced schemes for girl children in Tamil Nadu, pensions for women-headed BPL families in Kerala, cash transfers in West Bengal, entrepreneurship support in Assam, and free e-bikes for girl students in Puducherry.

THIS WEEK CHANGED EVERYTHING

April 14, 1891

Birth of B R Ambedkar reshapes access to education

134 years ago, B R Ambedkar was born. He pushed for access across caste lines and built institutions for excluded groups, becoming a key force in making education a constitutional right in India. Modern debates on equity and reservations still draw directly from his work.

April 15, 1929

Birth of K P P Nambiar drives India's electronics ecosystem

96 years ago, K P P Nambiar was born, later founding institutions like Keltron, contributing to building the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing. He pushed India towards building its own computing systems. Today's IT, electronics, and hardware careers build on this foundation.

April 19, 1975

Aryabhata launch begins India's space science era

50 years ago, India launched its first satellite, Aryabhata, proving it could design and build complex space systems. It created the country's first generation of space scientists. Today's careers in ISRO, space tech, and satellite engineering stem from this moment and much of India's wider STEM space ecosystem.

April 18, 1991

Kerala achieves total literacy through mass learning

34 years ago, Kerala was declared fully literate after a volunteer-driven campaign that took education beyond classrooms. It showed that learning could be community-led and scalable. Today's focus on digital literacy and lifelong learning builds on this model.

April 14, 2003

Human Genome Project completes global knowledge map

22 years ago, the Human Genome Project was declared complete, mapping nearly all human genes with high accuracy, turning biology into data. Fields like bioinformatics, genetic testing, and precision medicine rely on this open-access knowledge base.

A MATTER OF LANGUAGE

ANGELA MARY THOMAS

INDIA inches closer to full implementation of the National Education Policy 2020. The latest step: CBSE has introduced a three-language framework from Class 6, beginning the 2026-27 academic session.

Under the mandate, students will study three languages — at least two of them Indian — with all three continuing as examinable subjects through higher classes. English, notably, is now treated as a foreign language rather than a default.

While the model is not new, its scope is. Previously, the three-language formula applied only up to Class 8, with implementation varying widely across states and schools.

The policy text has set the direction, implementation now rests with stakeholders. "It's great that the government is pushing to promote regional languages. But the issue is capacity and staffing. Most schools across the country are already understaffed, and this policy will require large scale hiring or government postings. Without that, schools will struggle to implement it," said Anumita, a CBSE teacher from Chennai.

The framework is ambitious in its design. CBSE will now offer all 22 scheduled languages as options, though their availability may differ across schools. Karthik S, a teacher from Kerala, notes that a student's language preference may not always align with what their school can realistically provide.

"India's linguistic landscape is vast. But, if a student in Assam wants to study Malayalam, for instance, it might not be possible. Schools will need to hire more teachers, even on a contractual basis, and that cost will likely reflect in fees," he said. For parents, the policy registers more through its long term implications than its immediate impact.

"Making English a foreign language could reduce academic burden, students wouldn't be studying three languages on top of English. But as it is no longer the default, students may miss out on global languages like French or Spanish, which could limit international opportunities," said Sindhu Sethu, parent of a Class 8 student.

Multilingual citizens are better equipped for a globalised, interconnected world, and the NEP's trilingual framework is a meaningful push in that direction. Whether the supporting ecosystem can keep pace with its ambition is a question the coming academic year will begin to answer.

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MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

BTS makes history

BTS became the first K-pop group to perform as a musical guest on Saturday Night Live (SNL) on this day in 2019

SOUTH KOREA TO GLOBAL

BTS is a South Korean pop music band, comprising Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V and Jungkook. They gained international stardom in the late 2010s

DEBUT IN US MEDIA

This episode of SNL, a US television show, was hosted by Emma Stone, where they performed their hit song *Boy With Luv*, featuring Halsey

TRENDSETTERS

The hashtag #BTSxSNL trended #1 on Twitter worldwide. The band also broke numerous records on YouTube

CE's curated list of events in Bengaluru

PG 2

ASHA BHOSLE

September 8, 1933 - April 12, 2026

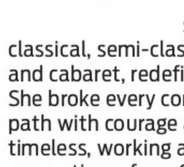
GOODBYE, JAANEMAN!

With the passing of legendary singer Asha Bhosle, the country loses one of its most versatile voices, whose songs continue to influence the emotional and musical landscape of Indian cinema. Tributes pour in from across the music and film fraternity, as *CE* remembers her unmatched range, high energy, fearless experimentation and timeless legacy

A quiet Sunday turned heavy, as if music had come to an abrupt halt. Asha Bhosle, 92, the iconic singer whose career spanned nearly eight decades, passed away in Mumbai, marking the end of an era in Indian music. The unrivalled queen of Indian playback had crooned over 12,000 songs in as many as 20 languages for leading actresses, including Helen, Zeenat Aman, Rekha and Urmila Matondkar. Known for her infectious energy and peppy repertoire, she is the younger sister of the late legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. Over the course of her illustrious journey, she lent her voice to a range of songs that defined generations, from the playful charm of *Aaiye Meherabaan* to the bold intensity of *Dum Maro Dum* and the timeless elegance of *In Ankhon Ki Masti*. She was nominated for two Grammy Awards and received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (2000), India's highest recognition in the arts, as well as the country's second-highest civilian honour.

Inputs: Paramita Ghosh, Avinash Ramachandran, Anushree Madhavan, Sruthi Hemachandran, Anjali Ram, Tejal Sinha, Ashwin S, Jayabhuvaneshwari B

L Subramaniam, renowned violinist



Asha ji was one of the most important and versatile performers who will always be remembered. She had such power and creativity in her voice. The whole family – Lata ji and Asha ji were a gift to Bollywood. I had the opportunity to meet Asha ji a couple of times; once during a festival in Hampi, where Asha ji was supposed to sing and leave, but the programme started late, which upset her. In addition, someone corrected her because she spoke in Tamil; it was around the time when Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were in conflict over water issues. But when she started singing, the mood changed. She had it in her to take the audience into her palm at any moment. She definitely had an unforgettable personality. The loss is irreplaceable. She was one of the greatest legends who dominated Indian cinema.

Vijay Prakash, singer

Asha Bhosle ji was a university of music for generations of artistes. Her voice effortlessly spanned classical, semi-classical, ghazals and cabaret, redefining versatility. She broke every conventional path with courage and remained timeless, working across generations, from SD Burman to AR Rahman. Her recent performance in Dubai reflected her passion and devotion to music. I feel grateful to have met her in person. I was introduced to Asha ji for the first time at my guru Suresh Wadkar ji's house as a talent from Mysuru. She spoke to me and said that she had also sung in the South and emphasised the importance of practising music every day.

Muzaffar Ali, director

Asha ji was the voice of Umrao and she became Umrao Jaan for the film. She knew we had to work collectively to go the extra mile. She wanted me to read Mirza Hadi Ruswa's novel *Umrao Jaan Ada* to her. I was her Urdu teacher for the film. Singers like Asha ji were already adept in Urdu, having worked with great composers and lyricists. I just had to teach her the spirit of Lucknow. She was a different kind of artiste who was seeking newness. For this film, she sang on one note lower than her usual to add more depth to her voice.

Raghava Dwarki, director-writer

It took her almost 37 years to make a comeback to the industry after her debut in Kannada with the historical film *Krantiveera Sangollirayanna* (1967), with her sisters Asha and Usha Mangeshkar, and her second project *Doorada Betta* (1973), starring Dr Rajkumar and Bharathi Vishnuvardhan. She returned with my film *Mathe Mungaru* (2010), singing *Helade Kaarana*. Asha ji was unsure when we approached her, citing a language barrier. Later, we requested her to at least listen to the composition. For three months, she would call regularly, listen to the track and share her thoughts. Eventually, she agreed and we travelled to Mumbai for the recording. She found a few Kannada words difficult and some were rewritten on the spot.

Ilaiyaraaja, music composer

I can never forget the amount of love, affection and respect she had for me. She was a lovable sister and someone who I will never forget. Her talent was limitless and her voice was unique. Every time she visited Chennai, even if it was for an interview, she would meet me. I can never forget the love she showered, nor can I forget her voice.

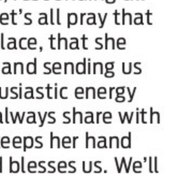
Anuradha Sriram, playback singer

Asha ji was a pioneer of creativity even before the current independent music wave brought out the creative aspect of musicians in multiple genres. Growing up, I was a fan of her Marathi Natya Sangeet and was also a regular listener of her ghazals. The way she brought her own style into every song that she sang, elevated the tracks and stood as examples of her experimental nature. A lot of my songs are a conglomeration of my understanding of her aesthetics. The masculine vocal layer, in *Nilavai Kondu Va*, was my being inspired by her, as was *Nalam Nalamariya Aaval*, which was inspired by her *Abhi Na Jao Chhod Kar*. She was the reason I created Chennai Girl. The way she dressed with pearls, and how she carried herself was inspiring.

Mahesh Kale, Nat'l Award-winning singer

There are a few people whom you place on such a pedestal that they become immortal. Asha Tai was one such person. I addressed her as 'Atya,' as she is my Guruji's sister. I've seen her visit his home in the '90s for rakhi; later, we crossed paths again when she was a guest judge on a reality show I was judging. I got to experience the human behind the legend, and she was incredibly endearing. The hallmark of a true legend is their ability to put you at such disarming ease that you begin to forget who they really are. Asha tai had that rare quality...along with an infectious enthusiasm.

Nagendra Prasad, lyricist



Among Indian singers, very few retained a youthful quality in their voice over the years. Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle were in that rare category, where age did not reflect in their singing. One only wishes there were more songs in Kannada from both the sisters. Asha Bhosle's Kannada journey was brief, but it stands out for the people she worked with; there was a long gap in between, but we will always remember her for the way she returned after decades for a single song, *Helade Kaarana* from the film *Mathe Mungaru*.

Shankar Mahadevan, music composer-singer

Didi and her music will never ever perish from this face of this earth till human beings exist. Because her contribution is something you cannot describe in words. She is somebody who's going to live forever, going to be there on our phones, on television, on every single medium where music plays. She's going to be there with us, with her amazing voice, resounding all over the planet. Let's all pray that she's in a better place, that she keeps blessing us and sending us her positive, enthusiastic energy that she used to always share with us, and that she keeps her hand over our head and blesses us. We'll miss you, Didi.

Aruna Sairam, renowned Carnatic vocalist

A singer sings a song, but Asha Bhosle ji lived it. In those fleeting minutes, she didn't merely render music – she unfolded an entire life, a complete journey. Every shade of emotion found its place: the ecstasy, the longing, the mischief, the tenderness, the playfulness, the quiet ache, the soaring joy. She made us feel it all...she made us live it. Such artistes are not born often. They arrive once in an era and in their presence, they create an era. My deepest salutations to the 'mahaan kalakar' Asha ji.

Shruti Haasan, actor-singer

Asha ji was one of the most iconic and influential voices and a huge inspiration for generations! I count myself to be very blessed to have been in her presence growing up and to see her work and create her magic. She will always be greatly celebrated for her immense contribution to music.

Giridhar Udupa, ghatam artiste

Asha Bhosle ji was not just a singer, but a universe of expression. As a musician, I have drawn immense inspiration from her ability to transcend genres with such ease and soul. Being a Carnatic classical musician, I deeply connect with the energy and spontaneity she brought to her live performances. There was always a sense of freedom and joy in her singing. One of my personal favourites is *Kahin Aag Lage Lag Jaaye* from *Taal*. Her music will continue to guide and inspire generations.

CITY READ

AP minister addresses university students

Nara Lokesh, Minister for Human Resources Development of Andhra Pradesh, addressed students of Greenwood High International School, Sarjapur, at the Graduation Day ceremony of the IB Diploma Class of 2026 on April 11. Held under the theme 'Pioneering Possibilities,' the event brought together students, parents and faculty to mark the cohort's academic journey. In his keynote address, Lokesh emphasised purpose-driven choices, integrity and resilience, urging students to 'follow purpose, not trends' and to view education as a way of learning how to think. The event featured formal recognitions and student-led segments. The event concluded with the traditional cap toss, signalling both the end of their school journey and the beginning of new academic paths.

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INSPIRE, ASPIRE & ACHIEVE
On Monday, 13th April 2026 at 10-00am
Venue: Sports Complex & PLN Stadium
Chief Guest
Dr. Ramanagouda V Nadagouda
Distinguished Scientist, Associate Director - Projects
U R Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru-17
Presided By
Sri S. Mariswamy, IPS
Chairman, PVP Welfare Trust
Guests of Honor
Dr. M. Mahadeva
Secretary, PVP Welfare Trust & Former Member, KPSC
Sri A. R. Krishnamurthy
Treasurer, PVP Welfare Trust
MLA, Kollegal Constituency, Govt. of Karnataka
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Senior Research Advisor
Dr. C. R. Mahesha
Dean (Academics)
Dr. T. N. Raju
Dean (Examination)
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BHARAT RATNA Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR
On Tuesday, 14th April 2026 at 10-00 am
Venue: JPN Auditorium
Chief Guest
Sri. Gopal. S. Setty
District & Sessions Judge (Rtd.)
Bengaluru-560020
Presided By
Sri S. Mariswamy, IPS
Chairman, PVP Welfare Trust
Guests of Honor
Dr. M. Mahadeva
Secretary, PVP Welfare Trust & Former Member, KPSC
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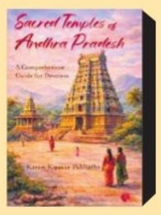
Best wishes from: PVP Welfare Trust, Deans, HoS, HoPs Teaching and Non-Teaching Staffs
135th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of
Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
Tuesday, 14th April 2026
"Be Educated Be Organised and Be Agitated"
-Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

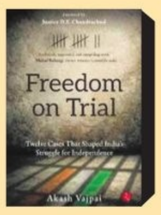
BOOK NOOK



Sacred Temples of Andhra Pradesh: A Comprehensive Guide for Devotees

By Kiran Kumar Pabbathi

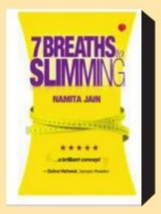
Written with devotional warmth and deep reverence, this book is an essential guide for both seekers and travellers curious about Andhra Pradesh's rich temple traditions and history.



Freedom on Trial: Twelve Cases That Shaped India's Struggle for Independence

By Akash Vajpai

The book chronicles stories of the landmark legal cases – trials that profoundly shaped the course of the independence movement.



7 Breaths to Slimming

By Dr Namita Jain

This book offers a refreshing, science-backed approach to losing weight through mindful breathing and smart portion control.

Odia Byanjana: Classic Odia Recipes

By Debasish Patanaik

In the annals of Indian food history, Odia cuisine has been overlooked. Food writers, chefs, and experts have collected recipes for 50 iconic dishes of Odisha in the book.

CAUGHT BY NATURE

Visitors immersed in The Second Nature: Hybrid Bodies, Hybrid Worlds, an exhibition at Gallery Time & Space, Lavelle Road | **NAGARAJA GADEKAL**

QUICKFIX

VEGETABLE QUINOA PULAO

Contributed by **Gargi,** New Delhi

INGREDIENTS

- **Quinoa:** 1 cup (soaked for 6-8 hours)
- **Ghee:** 1-2 tbsp
- **Cumin seeds, Ginger-garlic paste:** 1 tsp each
- **Choice of vegetables (Onion, tomatoes, peas, capsicum, etc.)**
- **Spices (Turmeric, chilli powder, garam masala, salt):** To taste

METHOD

- Rinse the soaked quinoa thoroughly. Heat ghee in a pressure cooker. Add cumin seeds and let them splutter, then add the choice of vegetables.
- Sauté the vegetables until they turn golden brown, then stir in the ginger-garlic paste.
- Add all your spices followed by the soaked quinoa. Pour in enough water just until the quinoa is fully immersed.
- Close the lid and cook for 2 to 3 whistles. Serve hot.

WHATWHENWHYWHERE

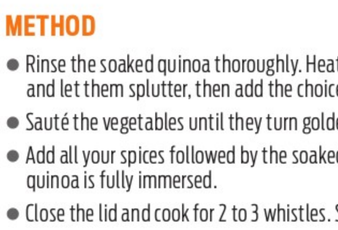
Baking Dreams

This summer, unleash the baker in you at a cake-baking workshop curated for everyone alike. Place your chef hats and mix, bake and decorate dreamy treats from scratch.

WHEN: April 13, 8.30pm

WHERE: Fabrizio - Creative Activity Hub, BTM Layout

CALL: 99017 38753



Haha Time

Catch some of the leading comedians of the city at this standup show. Take your friends and family and enjoy watching them deliver witty punchlines and relatable humour that will have you laughing out loud.

WHEN: April 13, 9pm

WHERE: Ministry of Comedy, Koramangala

DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

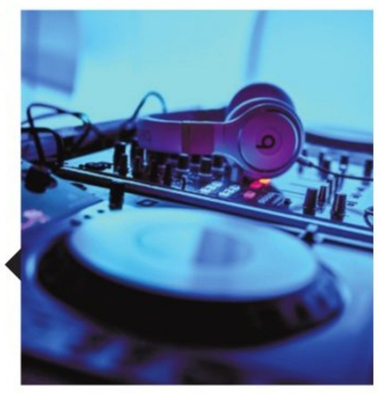
Energy On

Kickstart your week with a surge of adrenaline and shatter the weekday blues with DJ Harsh spinning the most explosive tracks. Enjoy a massive 30 per cent off on your bill while you dive into the ultimate high-energy atmosphere.

WHEN: April 13, 8pm

WHERE: No Limmits Lounge And Club, Brigade Road

CALL: 90089 79977



DREAM WORLD

Step into a mesmerising world of science, immersing yourself in interactive exhibits. Witness microscopic wonders, hands-on experiments and awe-inspiring visuals in an all-ages discovery zone. **WHEN:** April 13, 1pm onwards **WHERE:** Phoenix Mall of Asia, Bellary Road **CALL:** 80683 49999

Songkran Special

Step into Songkran festival with Joyful festival delights and experience a limited-time menu to celebrate Thailand's vibrant water festival. This special offering brings authentic street flavours to your table, blending festive joy with signature Southeast Asian dishes.

WHEN: April 13, 12pm onwards

WHERE: Nasi and Mee, across all outlets

CALL: 70225 45466

Festive Feasts

This Chithirai – the Tamil New Year, savour tradition and celebrate blessings – relishing vibrant flavours and festive joy served the traditional way on a banana leaf. Each dish is a tribute to time-honoured recipes, crafted to give you an authentic and memorable dining experience.

WHEN: April 13, 12.30pm

WHERE: Madras Kitchen - Marriott Executive Apartments, Vittal Mallya Road **CALL:** 90360 54585

High Beats

Enter into Pulse Room's immersive wonder and interact with thousands of glowing lights that pulse to your heartbeat in this installation. Experience pure magic blending tech and emotion, celebrating life's rhythm with signature interactive art. **WHEN:** April 13, 8pm **WHERE:** Just BLR, Brigade Road **CALL:** 8047483163

DR VIVEK ARORA

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Crown Vet, Delhi.

My cat's eyes are suddenly watering. What is a possible reason for it and should I be worried?

Sudden watery eyes in cats can occur due to several reasons, ranging from mild to more serious. Common causes in Indian settings include allergies, dust, smoke, or chemical irritants, viral infections like feline herpesvirus, or bacterial conjunctivitis. Less commonly, blocked tear ducts, eye injuries, or glaucoma may be responsible. Watch for additional signs such as redness, swelling, discharge, squinting, or changes in appetite and behavior. If the tearing persists beyond a day, turns yellow/green, or the cat shows discomfort, it is important to consult a veterinarian promptly for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

ASK AN XPERT

EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

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FITBIT

HERE IS HOW LOW-IMPACT WORKOUTS CAN STILL TRANSFORM YOUR BODY

When people think of fitness, they often imagine intense workouts, heavy lifting and sweating it out daily. But not everyone needs high-impact training to see results. Low-impact workouts can be just as effective when done consistently.

WHAT LOW-IMPACT REALLY MEANS

Low-impact workouts are exercises that are gentle on your joints. This includes walking, yoga, Pilates, cycling and controlled strength training. These movements improve strength, stamina and flexibility without putting stress on your body.

CONSISTENCY OVER INTENSITY

The biggest advantage of low-impact training is that you can do it more often. Since it is easier on the body, there is a lower risk of injury. This makes it ideal for beginners, people recovering from injuries, or anyone dealing with joint discomfort.

STRENGTH BUILDING STILL HAPPENS

Low-impact does not mean low results. Slow, controlled movements like squats, resistance band exercises and yoga holds help build muscle. The focus is on form and control rather than speed.

BETTER MOBILITY AND POSTURE

Workouts like yoga and Pilates improve flexibility, balance and posture. They also strengthen your core, which supports everyday movement and reduces the risk of injury.

SUPPORTS FAT LOSS IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY

Low-impact workouts still burn calories. When combined with a balanced diet, they support fat loss without putting too much stress on the body. This also helps with better recovery and improved sleep.

MENTAL BENEFITS MATTER TOO

These workouts are not just physical. They help reduce stress, improve focus and support overall well-being. Adding breathwork or mindful movement can make a big difference.

You do not need extreme workouts to get results. What matters more is consistency and how your body feels. Low-impact training is easier to maintain over time. And that is what leads to real, long-term transformation.

By Abhishek K, fitness expert, cult — a fitness and wellness platform

ARTCORNER

WARMTH WITHIN

In this oil painting, artist Mariappan tenderly captures the quiet strength and warmth of a mother's love

Celebrating shared PLATES & PALATES

As we approach a new Tamil year, *CE* brings you some common dishes that the state shares with Sri Lanka

SONU M KOTHARI

A heap of snow-like grated coconut, the greens of curry leaves, and the crimson dried chillies – this kitchen palette mirrors a commonality and fragrances from the past. A past interspersed with war, a longing for homeland, a feeling of belonging and familiarity.

For Lakshmi S, a mental health professional at BALM, Kovalam, who has spent two decades in the island country of Sri Lanka, the bonds of shared culture with Tamil Nadu reminds her of the remnants of food memories. While she had the best of two cuisines – Tamil and Sinhalese – she observed striking similarities in the cooking styles. She notes, "There is shared affinity through rice and curry, an abundant use of coconut, curry leaves, and more. Rice as the staple grain is transformed into puttu or pittu, idiyappam or idiappa, and appam or appa across cultures. The choice of curry powders used accentuates the region."

One among many shared bonds between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka is the new year. Every year, April 14 is observed as Puthandu and Aluth Avuudda respectively. In Lakshmi's words, "It is the time when the sun transitions from Meena Rashiya (Pisces) to Mesha Rashiya (Aries) moving into a new season and time for renewing hope."

Be it any occassion, it is food that brings people together at the table. "The tradition of shared celebrations, festivals, and eating together as rituals is reported to promote wellness among communities and maintain interconnectedness. To bonding through food and bon appetite!" emphasises Lakshmi. Here are some recipes that reflect the connect between the two cultures.

Stir fried vallarai keerai or gotukola (pennywort)

Commonly available greens also considered a memory andcognition booster

Ingredients

- A small bunch of vallarai cleaned and very finely shredded
- Small onions (chopped finely): 5-6
- Green chillies sliceda thin (add more for a zing): 2
- Lime (juiced): 1
- Grated coconut: 1/4 cup
- Salt and pepper: to taste

Method

Blend all the ingredients well with your fingers, and lastly, add the coconut. Serve with hot rice.

Parippu or Dal curry

When ordinary dal gets extraordinary with a coconut mylk makeover

Ingredients

- Masoor dal (washed): 1 cup
- Onions (medium-sized, sliced): 2
- Green chillies slit: 2 -3
- Turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- Curry powder: 1 tsp
- A sprig of curry leaves
- A roll of cinnamon (an inch)
- Mustard seeds: 1 tsp
- Coconut oil: 1 tbsp
- Thick coconut mylk extract: 1 cup
- Thin coconut mylk extract: cup
- Coconut oil

Method

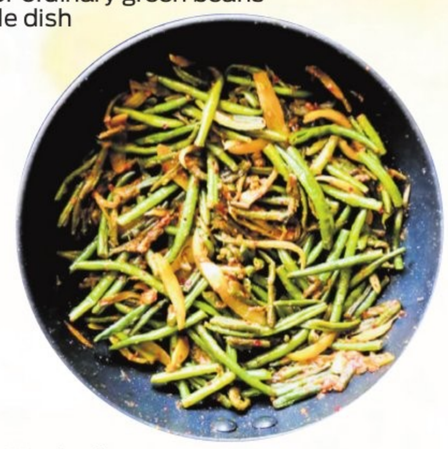
In a deep pan, cook dal with turmeric, onions, chillies, curry powder, cinnamon and salt in thin coconut mylk extract. When the dal is soft, add the creamy thick coconut mylk and cook. In oil, splutter mustard seeds, dry red chillies and garnish the parippu. Serve with hot rice or sliced sourdough bread (crusty).

Bonchi (green beans)

A cute moniker for ordinary green beans makes a tasty side dish

Ingredients

- Green beans (sliced slant): 200g
- Onions (medium sized, thinly sliced): 2
- Green chillies slit: 2
- Garlic cloves and finely chopped ginger: 2-3
- Turmeric: 1 tsp
- Curry powder: 1 tsp
- Red chilli powder to taste
- Thick coconut mylk extract: ½ cup
- Sugar: ½ tsp
- Curry leaves
- Salt: to taste
- Coconut oil



Method

Fry the onions, garlic, ginger, green chillies, and curry leaves on high flame. To it, add turmeric, sugar, chilli powder, curry powder, beans and salt as per taste. When the beans are almost cooked, keeping it crunchy, add coconut mylk and cook till it's dry. Serve bonchi on the side with hot rice.

Sambol (or sambal)

Always a hit especially with the lime juice enhancement

Ingredients

- Half a coconut: freshly scraped
- Small onions finely chopped (use shallots for a bite): 2
- Red chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Pepper powder: 1 tsp
- Lime
- Salt: to taste

Method

Blend all the ingredients well with your fingers. Add coconut and squeeze in lime at the end and blend well. Serve with buttery crusty bread, idiyappam or hot rice.

Jackfruit curry (or palaakkai or polos)

An unusual dish and texture from a raw fruit

Ingredients

- Raw/young green jackfruit (remove skin, cut into chunky cubes): 200 g
- Onion (large aka Bombay onion, chopped finely): 1
- Green chillies (finely chopped): 1-2
- A roll of Sri Lankan cinnamon
- Fenugreek seeds: ½ tsp
- Turmeric: 1 tsp
- Thick coconut mylk: half a cup
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Curry powder
- Tamarind water (a lime-sized ball): half a cup
- Curry leaves: a sprig
- Pandan leaves (rampey)
- Coconut oil

Method

Gently cook the jackfruit in tamarind water. Don't overcook. In coconut oil, splutter onions, chillies, cinnamon, curry and pandan leaves. Add the jackfruit, fenugreek seeds, turmeric, curry powder (Lankan curry powder or Jaffna curry powder), and salt and pepper as per taste. Finally, pour in the coconut mylk extract and simmer till the gravy is almost dry. Serve the curry with hot rice.

Lankan curry powder (Thuna paha)

Dry roast a cup of dried chillies, ½ tbsp peppercorn, 2 tbsp coriander seeds, 1 tbsp cumin seeds, an inch of cinnamon, and dried curry leaves. Add 1 tsp turmeric powder to it and dry grind. Store in an airtight jar for use.

Note: There are many variations to the curry powders and the measurement can be adjusted too.

Jaffna curry powder

Dry-roast 1 cup red chillies, 2 tbsp coriander, 1 tbsp cumin, 1 tbsp fennel and ½ tbsp fenugreek seeds until deep brown. Grind into a fine powder. Store in an airtight jar for use.

Soddhi or Hoddha

Can't go wrong with this winner vegan cream

Ingredients

- Potatoes (chopped into chunks): 2
- Small onions sliced (sambar or pearl onions): 3-4
- Fenugreek seeds: 1 tsp
- Green chillies slit: 2-3
- Turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- A roll of cinnamon (one inch)
- Thick coconut mylk: 1 cup
- Thin coconut mylk: 1 cup
- Curry leaves
- Lime (juice): 1
- Salt: to taste

(A Jaffna touch: Use coconut oil to temper mustard seeds, some sliced onions, curry leaves, chopped garlic and green chillies.)

Method

In a pan, add onions, potatoes, fenugreek seeds, chillies, turmeric, cinnamon, curry leaves and simmer in the thin extract of coconut mylk with salt to taste. When the potatoes are soft, add the thick mylk and simmer. Finally, switch off the stove, garnish with a squeeze of lime. Serve with idiyappam or puttu.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I RAJANNA. C, residing at No 03, Rajanna Bulding, Mohan Layout, Begur, Bengaluru: 560068, Karnataka Have changed my minor Son name **SUJAY KRISHNA. R** (Old Name) changed to **SUJAY. R** (New Name) vide affidavit dated 08/04/2026 sworn before Notary **Hemalatha.P,** Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **PUPPALA SUDHARANI,** C/o. Munimekala Joseph Dilip, aged about 49 years, No.37, Church Opposite Main Road, Indeed Therapy Centre, Parvathi Nagar Main Road, Kithiganur Layout. Virgonagar, Bangalore - 560049. I have change my name from **"PUPPALA SUDHARANI"** to **"MUNIMEKALA SUDHARANI"** vide Affidavit dated 10-04-2026, sworn before Notary **C Sasikala,** Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Vivek Kumar Singh**, currently a resident of No. 44, 3rd Cross, Papaiah Layout, Horamavu, Bangalore-560043, and my permanent address at Gram Jogipur Dakshin, Post Kukudijhar, Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh-486661, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **Vivek Kumar** to **Vivek Kumar Singh,** vide affidavit dated 11.04.2026, sworn to before B. Seshagiri, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SSHALINI PATTANAIK** (New Name) previously called **SAHIBA SHALINI PATTANAIK** date of birth is 21/09/1994, W/o. Subhankar Mondal, presently residing at B-208, Springseas Windchimes, Muthsandra Main Road, Varthur, Bangalore-560087. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name from **"SAHIBA SHALINI PATTANAIK"** to **"SSHALINI PATTANAIK"** vide Affidavit dated 10.04.2026, Sworn before Advocate and Notary A.M. Rajasekar, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Mr. JISHANAND KOTTAMALA**, Aged about 53 years, S/o. Kunhikannan Kottamala, resident of #104-A, Defence Enclave, K.Narayanapura Cross, Geddalahalli, Kothanur, Bangalore, Karnataka -560077, have changed my name from **JISHANAND KUMAR KOTTAMALA** to **JISHANAND KOTTAMALA,** for all purposes vide affidavit dated 11/04/2026, sworn before D. RAJANNA, Advocate and Notary Public, K. Narayanapura, Bangalore-77

CHANGE OF NAME
We, (1) Partha Sarathi M.R., son of M. Muninarayana, aged about 52 years, **(2) Anthony P. Mala,** wife of Partha Sarathi M.R., aged about 53 years, both are residing at No. 792, 76th 'A' Cross, 6th Block, Rajajinagara, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560 010, have changed our child name from **"AKHILA. P.A"** to **"ADITHI. P.A.",** vide affidavit dated 10/4/2026 sworn to before B Chitra Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **I SANTOSH KUMAR / SANTOSH KUMAR JAIN (BOKADIA)** residing at No: 155, Flat No : 301, Kalpavriksh Enclave, 3rd Main, 8th Cross, Chamarajpet, Bengaluru: 560018, Karnataka. Have changed my name to **SANTOSH KUMAR BHERCHAND** BOKADIA vide affidavit dated 06/04/2026 sworn before Notary **Hemalatha.P,** Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **(OLD NAME) TILAK KUMAR,** Residing at # 7/45, Sri Bhairaveshwara Nilaya, Devaraj Urs Street, Venkateshapuram, Arabic College Post, Bengaluru 560045, have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) TILAK KUMAR** to **(NEW NAME) TILAK KUMAR.K** vide affidavit dated 04.04.2026 sworn before Notary S.Nagaraja., Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VENKATESH N**, S/o Late Narashimappa, aged about 46 years, residing at Chemmasandra Village, Virgonagar Post, Bangalore - 560049, have changed my daughter name from **SHASHIKIRAN B V** to **SHIVANI B V,** vide affidavit dated 09.04.2026 sworn before notary B Chitra, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
We, **Vaibhav Shekatkar** and **Ankita Shekatkar** parents of **AVYIKA SHEKATKER**, both residing at: Flat No.A-1102, Candeur Rise Apartment, Varthur Main Road, Beside Vinayaka Theatre, Varthur, Bangalore-560087. Hereby declare that, We have changed our minor daughter's name from **"AVIKA SHEKATKAR"** to **"AVYIKA SHEKATKER"** vide Affidavit dated 11.04.2026, Sworn before Advocate and Notary A.M. Rajasekar, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Mr. Vikas Naiyar, A04, Vaishnavi Orchids, Kasavanahalli, Bangalore-560035, have changed my minor daughter's name from MANAVI GRACE to MANVI NAIYAR** Vide Affidavit dated 22/07/2023 sworn before Advocate & Notary Veena .K, Bangalore

ಹೆಸರು ಬದಲಾವಣೆ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು–560078, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಕ್ಷಿಣ, ಜೆ.ಪಿ.ನಗರ, ಸಾರಕ್ಕಿ ಸಿಗ್ನಲ್ ಪತ್ರಿರ, ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣನಗರ 1ನೇ ಮುಖ್ಯ ರಸ್ತೆ 7ನೇ ಅಡ್ಡ ರಸ್ತೆ ಮನೆ ನಂ.43 ಈ ವಿಳಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಸವಾಗಿರುವ ಲೇಟ್ ನಾರಾಯಣಯ್ಯ.ಎಮ್. ಅವರ ಪತ್ನಿಯಾದ ಸುಮಾರು 64 ವರ್ಷ ವಯಸ್ಸುಳ್ಳ ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಭಾಗ್ಯ ಆದ ನಾನು ಈ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರಮಾಣೀಕರಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ, ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ನಮೂದಿಸಿದ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರುಗಳಾದ "ಸೌಭಾಗ್ಯ" ಮತ್ತು "ಭಾಗ್ಯ" ಮತ್ತು ನನ್ನ ಗಂಡನ ಹೆಸರುಗಳಾದ ಎಮ್.ನಾರಾಯಣ್ ಮತ್ತು ನಾರಾಯಣಯ್ಯ ಎಮ್ ಹೆಸರುಗಳು ನನ್ನ ಮತ್ತು ನನ್ನ ಗಂಡನ ಹೆಸರುಗಳೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದು ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು "ಭಾಗ್ಯ" ಗಂಡನ ಹೆಸರು ನಾರಾಯಣಯ್ಯ ಎಮ್. ಎಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ದಿನಾಂಕ 10/4/2026 ರಂದು ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ನೋಟರಿ ಮತ್ತು ವಕೀಲರಾದಂಕಪ ಎಲ್ ಪುಟ್ಟರಾಜು ರವರ ಸಮಕ್ಷಮದಲ್ಲಿ ದೃಢೀಕರಿಸಿರುತ್ತೇನೆ.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Mr. Vikas Naiyar, A04, Vaishnavi Orchids, Kasavanahalli, Bangalore-560035, have changed my minor son's name from NIVAAN NAIYAR to MANAV NAIYAR** Vide Affidavit dated 22/07/2023 sworn before Advocate & Notary Veena .K, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MAMATHA CHANDRASHEKAR. Residing at #No-204, 4th CROSS, 2nd BLOCK, NEAR ANJANEYA TEMPLE, H M T LAYOUT, VIDYARANYAPURA, BANGALORE NORTH, BANGALORE-560097. have changed my name from **MAMATHA CHANDRASHEKAR** to **MAMATHA G M,** vide affidavit dated 11/4/2026 sworn to before G.R. RAVICHANDRA REDDY Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ANTHONY C** residing at No.19.U6/2, 2nd Cross, Rayapuram JJR Nagar, Goripalya Chamrajpet Bengaluru- 560018 have changed my name to **ANTHONY ANAND C** vide affidavit dated: 11/4/2026 Before Notary **K.V.Mani** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MUDALIAR HEMALATA BALU**, W/o SANTOSH KUMAR M, Residing at No. 26/27, 2nd Main Road, 2nd Cross, Jagajyothinagar, Panchasheelanagara, BENGALURU -560072, Have Changed My Name from **MUDALIAR HEMALATA BALU to HEMLATA BALU.** Vide Affidavit Dated 11.04.2026 before Notary L.N.RAJENDRAN. Mysuru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VIKAS KANHAYALAL DADHICH**, aged about 35 years, S/o. Mr. Kanhayalal Dadhich, presently residing at Flat No. A-107, Sterling Park Apartment, Sahakar Nagar, Bangalore-560092, Karnataka, India, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **VIKAS KANAIYALAL DADHICH** to **VIKAS KANHAYALAL DADHICH,** vide affidavit dated 11.04.2026, sworn to before K.V. Jagannath Reddy, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Pooja Shyam Gupta,** (New Name) previously called **Pooja Gupta** date of birth is 19/07/1993. W/o Sajal Suhane. R/at Flat A310, GRC ShreeKrish, Sy No. 46, MJ Nagar Road, Anekal Taluk, Choodasandra, Huskur, Dist Bengaluru, Karnataka-560099. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name from **'Pooja Gupta'** to **'Pooja Shyam Gupta'** vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026, Sworn before Advocate and Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME
We, (1) Partha Sarathi M.R., son of M. Muninarayana, aged about 52 years, **(2) Anthony P. Mala,** wife of Partha Sarathi M.R., aged about 53 years, both are residing at No. 792, 76th 'A' Cross, 6th Block, Rajajinagara, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560 010, have changed our child name from **"AMSHULA. P.A"** to **"ADVITHI. P.A.",** vide affidavit dated 10/4/2026 sworn to before B Chitra Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **AYESHA BANU,** W/o Niyamath Ulla Sharieff, residing, at No.03, 5th Cross, 2nd Main, Road, Anwar Layout, Venkateshpuram, Arabic College, Bangalore-560045, have changed my name from **AYEESHA BANU** (old name) to **AYESHA BANU** (new name) vide affidavit dated:09-04-2026 before Notary, Gangaraju, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NAVEEN KUMAR JAIN,** S/o Chandrakanth Jain, age 46 years, R/at #33, Matru Krupa, 2nd Cross Road, Manorayanapalya, R T Nagar, Bengaluru-560032 do hereby declare that in my son **DAKSH JAIN** school records and Class 10 Marksheet my name is mentioned as **NAVEEN,** but my correct and full name is **NAVEEN KUMAR JAIN,** I declare that both the names i.e. **NAVEEN** and **NAVEEN KUMAR JAIN** are one and the same and refers to me only, I further state that my son's full name is **DAKSH JAIN** and my full name is **NAVEEN KUMAR JAIN,** vide affidavit dated 6-4-2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **KV BACHI REDDY** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SAMYAK SUJAY**, aged about 21 years, No. 04, 6th Cross, Gummaiah Layout, Chikkalasandra Main Road, Subramanyapura, Bengaluru-560061, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **CHAITANYA RAVINDRA HULI** to **SAMYAK SUJAY,** vide affidavit dated 11.04.2026, sworn to before K.V. Mani, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MINAKSHI DEEPAKKUMAR MAHTO, resident of Flat No. W1-401, Bren Imperia, Shubh Enclave, Haralur Road, H S R Layout, Bengaluru-560102, Karnataka, have changed my name to MINAKSHI MAHTO** Vide Affidavit dated 11/04/2026 sworn before Advocate & Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore

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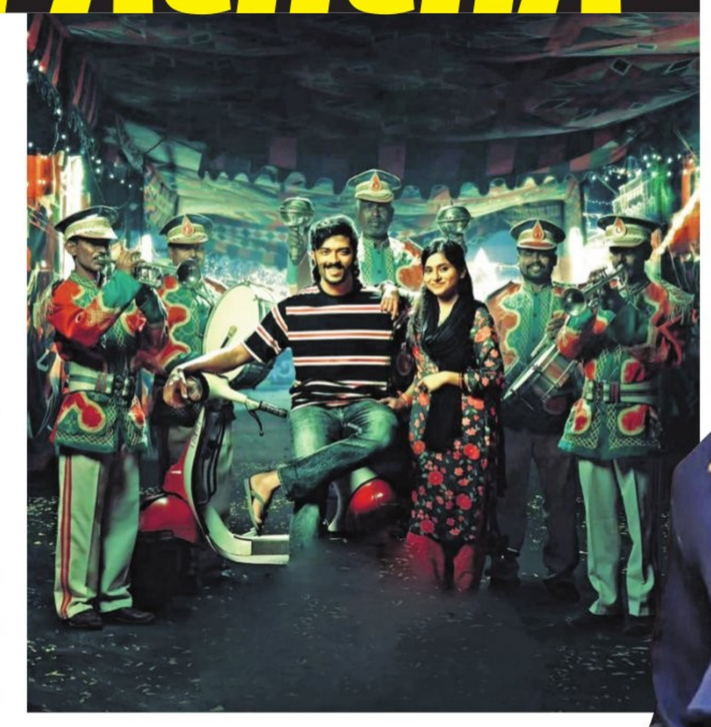
SUDEEP BRINGS A BOOST TO SANCHII'S MANGO PACHCHA

Kichcha Sudeep was spotted on the sets of Sanchii's launchpad, directed by Vivek, and there is buzz that Dhananjaya is set to play a special role

Sudeep



Dhananjaya

A SHARADHAA

SANCHII'S launch vehicle, *Mango Pachcha*, has been drawing the right kind of attention since it went into production, and now, as it nears its theatrical release, the film continues to build interest. Directed by Vivek and produced by Priya Sudeep under Supriyanvi Studios and KRG Studios (Karthik Gowda and Yogi G Raj), the crime thriller is now set to receive a boost with Kichcha Sudeep stepping into the picture.

According to sources, actor-filmmaker Sudeep, who was last seen in *Mark*, has been overseeing the film and visiting the set in recent days when key sequences were being filmed. There is also strong buzz about Daali Dhananjaya associating with the project, with reports suggesting he will be seen in a special role. An official update, however, is awaited.

The film, which *marks* the onscreen debut of Sanchii, Sudeep's nephew, was initially expected to be released earlier this year. However, the team has chosen to take additional time before bringing it to theatres, with a focus on shaping it into a solid launchpad for the newcomer.

Set in Mysuru, *Mango Pachcha* unfolds as a crime drama spanning a decade, from 2001 to 2011. The narrative is rooted in the city, following a chain of events that builds tension over time, with the setting playing a key role in reflecting different phases of Mysuru across the years.

With Kajal Kundar playing the female lead, the film also features an ensemble cast including Mayur Patel, Bhavana, Hamsa, Harini Srikant, Jai Gopinath and Prashanth Hiremath.

Cinematography is handled by Shekar Chandra, with music composed by Charan Raj. The film also features action sequences choreographed by Ravivarma and Satish, pointing to a mix of drama and action elements.

The film, led and directed by Aryn Santosh, has Manasvi Manu, Saranya, Akshitha Bopaiah and Pooja Shetty joining the fantasy drama
Saranya
Manaswi Maanu

Aryn Santosh casts four women characters for *CHENKOL*

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Aryn Santosh is set to make his directorial debut with *Chenkol: The Lost Kingdom*, a fantasy drama that combines scale, mystery and a narrative that moves across timelines. Having earlier revealed glimpses of the film's world, the latest update shifts focus to its female cast, with four actors playing significant roles.

Leading the ensemble is Manasvi Manu, who plays Mahima, a central character in the narrative. Known for her work in Vidyarthi Vidyarthinayare and her presence on television, she takes on a female lead role that connects the film's contemporary setting with its historical backdrop. Joining her is Saranya, a model-turned-actor with experience in Malayalam cinema, who makes her Kannada debut with the project and plays Parvathy.

The cast also includes Akshitha Bopaiah, who has appeared in Kannada and Tamil films and is known for her presence on television; she will be seen as Chirakkal Devi. Pooja Shetty plays the princess of the Chirakkal Kingdom.

The narrative of *Chenkol* unfolds across two timelines. In its first chapter, audiences are introduced to DJ Santu in a contemporary setting. The story then gradually shifts to a past dating back nearly 1,500 years, with the second chapter exploring the era of King Agastya and the origins of a lost kingdom.

The title carries symbolic meaning. *Chenkol*, or a royal sceptre, signifies rightful authority. The film brings together elements of mythology, devotion and history, and follows a journey that begins in Bengaluru and extends to Kerala, drawing from temple lore, including references to the Padmanabhaswamy Temple.

The film, produced by Winter Bridge Studioz and Pixie Originals, is being made in Kannada and Malayalam and has music by Manikanth Kadri.

Akshitha Bopaiah

LORD OF WAR SEQUEL TO GET A 2027 RELEASE

CE FEATURES

THE sequel to the 2005 crime drama film *Lords of War* has been announced with a release set for 2027. Along with the returning cast of Nicolas Cage and Bill Skarsgard, filmmaker Andrew Niccol is back as the writer and director of the sequel.

Ended production recently, the sequel will feature Cage reprising the role as Yuri Orlov, the world's most notorious arms dealer. When he discovers that he has a son, Anton (*Skarsgard*), a ruthless mercenary who exploits America's wars in the Middle East. Both are locked in a fierce rivalry fuelled by power, betrayal, and ambition. As the father and son are fighting each other, uncertainty lingers over the global arms trade.

The film also stars Laura Harrier (*White Men Can't Jump*), Greg Tarzan Davis (*Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning*), and Sylvia Hoeks (*A Sacrifice*). The original film's producers, Philippe Rousselet and Fabrice Gianfermi, are returning to back the project with their Vendome Pictures banner, alongside Niccol and Cage's Saturn Films.

Ride Along 3 is under development

CE FEATURES

OVER a decade after the launch of the buddy-cop franchise *Ride Along*, reports say that the third installment is in the works. Lead actors Kevin Hart and Ice Cube are in talks to return to the franchise. Writer Daniel Gold, of Amazon MGM Studios' Tough Guys fame, has been onboarded to pen a new take on the Universal project. Also, the franchise's director Tim Story and producer Will Packer are also being circled to return.

The film franchise has Hart and Ice Cube play brothers-in-law who both work with law enforcement. With different levels of expertise, the duo ends up in the various crime underworlds in Florida.

The first film, released in 2014, earned over $154.5 million, and its 2016 sequel grossed over $124.6 million. Ice Cube was last seen in the sci-fi film War of the Worlds, and Hart's previous theatrical release was the Borderlands video game adaptation. He will next be seen in the fourth Jumanji movie.

Sasha Pieterse to star in a fantasy

CE FEATURES

SASHA Pieterse, who is known for her role in Pretty Little Liars, will star in a film adaptation of Sherrilyn Kenyon's fantasy novel series, *Infernal Affairs*. Pieterse is backing the upcoming film under her newly formed Mother Bare Productions banner. In the film, Pieterse will portray Detective Sorcha O'Malley, of a secret police task force that fights supernatural entities, in Savannah, Georgia, USA. When she is partnered with Lucifer's son Lucien Teivel, who is exiled to Earth, they uncover a conspiracy connecting Heaven and Hell.

Cory Todd Hughes and Adrian Speckert are writing the script for the upcoming fantasy film, with a director yet to be announced. The disappearance of Pieterse's character, Alison DiLaurentis, in Pretty Little Liars kicks off the events of the series, which follows four best friends, Aria Montgomery, Emily Fields, Hanna Marin, and Spencer Hastings, who reunite a year after the disappearance of Alison. She reprised her role in the spin-off Pretty *Little Liars: The Perfectionists*.

Yieshaana Sannappanavar

Aditi, a five-take film

CE FEATURES

ADITI, produced by Millennium Ad Media, is being pitched as a film shot entirely in five takes. It has a predominantly women-led cast. Producers Valerina Maria Rogers and Nelson Rogers W are backing the film. Nelson Rogers W has written the story and screenplay and directed the film along with Solomon K George. The makers recently launched the film's songs, followed by a teaser.

Yieshaana Sannappanavar stars in the film, with Harshita Kallingal, Aarthi, Nisarga Manjunath, and Yasha playing prominent roles. The rest of the cast also includes Danny Kuttappa, Sunil, Ajith Kumar, and Gopi. The film is described as a psychological thriller focused on a character named *Aditi*. According to the makers, *Aditi* has been filmed in five continuous takes, each lasting about 20 to 25 minutes. The actors trained for several months to perform these long sequences. Veteran cinematographer PKH Das worked with the team to capture the extended shots. The film is set to release in Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Konkani. Women writers penned the dialogues across all versions. In Kannada, Kumudahalli Arunamurthy wrote the dialogues. The film also features two songs performed by Priya Mali and Chetan Nayak.

Music for the film is composed by Ramesh Krishna and Krishna Priyadarshan. Cinematography for the final schedule is by Venkatesh R, while Solomon K George has handled editing, and Raj Bhaskar has composed the background score. The film is shot in Bengaluru and Kanakapura. The film is currently in post-production and is expected to be submitted for censor certification soon. *Aditi* is currently scheduled for a June release.